12 Super Summer Side Dishes
perfect for picnics and potlucks

A Photo of EVERY RECIPE

Cuisine at home

Issue No.81 June 2010

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- Tasty Shrimp
- Juicy Burgers

52 NEW summer recipes

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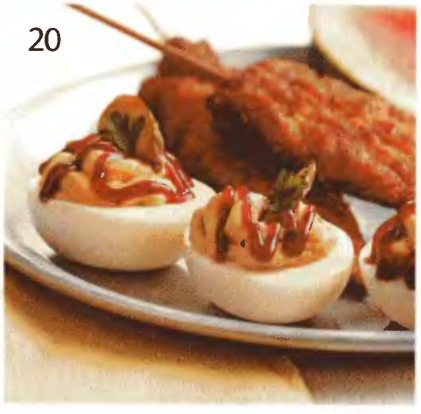

It seems like it's taken awhile, but summer has finally arrived. Now's the time to head outside, enjoy the weather, and fire up the grill. That's where we can help. Check out our three 30-minute grilling recipes — shrimp tacos, Spanish steak, and Cubano-style burgers beginning on page 8. One of them will be perfect for dinner tonight.

Just two for dinner? Our Steak Stack, Pesto Pasta, and easy-to-make Petite Toast desserts starting on page 32 are the ultimate menu for dining al fresco on the patio.

If you need to feed more than a few people, turn to *Cuisine for Less* on page 44. You'll be able turn off the oven, keep the grill going, and save a few bucks with our gourmet grilled pizza.

No matter what you're cooking this summer, we're certain any one of the 12 top-notch, summer side dishes in this issue will be the ideal accompaniment. They're all fresh and fabulous. Enjoy!

From the staff of —
Cuisine at home

ON THE COVER:
GRILLED SPANISH STEAK
WITH GARLIC-GOAT CHEESE
MASHED POTATOES, recipes pg 11

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tips&timesavers

DON'T CHOP, CRUMBLE

Instead of chopping fresh spinach, I prefer to crumble frozen leaves straight into the pan. Frozen spinach is quite brittle and easily breaks up into little pieces. To do this, wash and dry fresh spinach, then store it in an airtight container in the freezer until needed.

Lisa Mulcahey, Weedsport, NY

CHILLY WHIPPED CREAM

Cream whips best when it's kept cold, but whipping over a bowl of ice cubes is awkward. I prefer to use a cold pack. It doesn't melt, stays cold longer, and helps stabilize the bowl of cream.

Eriko Yokoyama, Watsonville, CA

PEELING MADE EASY

To peel garlic, I blanch the cloves in boiling water for a minute, then strain. Once cooled, the garlic skin is easily removed.

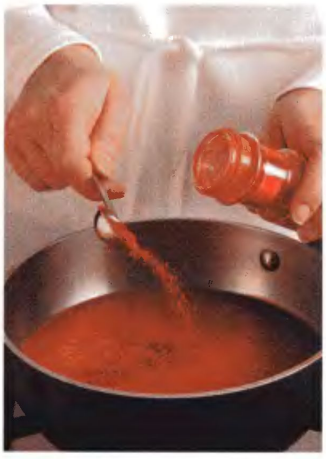
Eva Hernandez, Kansas City, MO

> For a convenient way to keep ginger fresher longer, peel it

PARMESAN FLAVOR

Save the rind from Parmesan cheese. It's full of flavor and makes a delicious addition to soups, stews, and chilies.

Joe Chesslin, San Francisco, CA



JAZZ UP YOUR SAUCE

To add a little pizzazz to spaghetti sauce, I like to add 1 or 2 teaspoons of chili powder. It gives the sauce an underlying warmth without overwhelming the other flavors.

Kathi Shafer, Waterloo, IA

INSTANT CRUST

Instant potato flakes are a great alternative in recipes that call for coating with flour, bread crumbs, or cracker crumbs. The resulting crust is crispy and light.

Sally Salatsky, Parma, OH

WHAT'S THIS FOR?

With so many ingredients in my pantry, it's easy to forget what seldom-used items are for. Now, I write the name of the recipe on each one to remind me.

Ann Sprague, Las Vegas, NV

MAKING A CLEAN BREAK

When I separate eggs, I crack the shells on a folded, damp paper towel to soften the blow. The resulting edge of the break is straighter, which makes it much easier to separate the eggs.

Irene Rose Gutierrez, Tucson, AZ

CLEAN PASTA MACHINE

It's a bad idea to use soap and water on a pasta machine. Instead, I brush off excess flour, then run a folded paper towel through the rollers and cutters. The paper cleans all the nooks and crannies.

Ellen Parker, Somerville, NJ

COVER ONCE, USE TWICE

Grilling chicken can be tricky because it isn't safe to handle cooked chicken with equipment you used on raw chicken — you could spread food-borne illness.

My solution: cover the tongs and platter with foil. Once the chicken's done, I discard the foil and reuse the tools without worry.

Brian Devon, Anaconda, MT

Up to $100 for Your Best Tip

Do you have an interesting solution to a cooking dilemma? We'd like to hear from you! Send us your clever culinary tip by mail or e-mail. Please include your name, address, and phone number. We'll pay you up to $100 if we select your tip.

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. . . . . and store in the refrigerator in a jar filled with sake or vodka.

mild-mannered sweet onions

Delicious raw, sautéed, or baked, these crisp, sweet beauties are one sure sign of spring in the kitchen!

Sweet onions are known for their mild nature. They have high amounts of sugar and water with only a hint of the tear-inducing sulphur of regular onions. This delicate balance gives them a pretty short season, roughly April through July, so pick some up before they're gone.

The most familiar names in the market are Texas Sweet, Vidalia, Walla Walla, and Maui. While outstanding in fresh recipes like salsas and salads, one of the best ways to use sweet onions is to take advantage of those extra sugars by caramelizing them, as in this decadent gratin.

Onions au Gratin
with Parmesan and sherry

Spread on rustic bread for an appetizer or as side dish with dinner.

Makes 4 servings
Total time: 50 minutes

- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 8 cups sliced sweet onions
- 1/2 cup dry sherry or chicken broth
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (4 oz.)
- 1/2 cup shredded Gruyère cheese
- 1/4 cup pitted kalamata olives, halved

Preheat oven to 400°.
Melt butter in a large cast-iron or other ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Add onions, stirring until slightly softened to make room in the pan; cover and cook until completely softened, 10 minutes.
Add sherry, thyme, and bay leaves; increase heat to medium-high. Sauté, uncovered, until the liquid evaporates and onions are browning, stirring occasionally, 10–15 minutes.
Combine cheeses, then stir 1/2 cup of cheese mixture into onion mixture. Top with remaining 1/2 cup cheese and bake until cheese is bubbly and browned, about 20 minutes.
Remove thyme sprigs and bay leaves, then sprinkle with olives. Let stand to cool slightly before serving.

Per 1/4 cup: 79 cal; 4g total fat (2g sat); 11mg chol; 97mg sodium; 8g carb; 1g fiber; 3g protein

After the onions have softened a bit, uncover the pan to infuse them with fresh herbs and dry sherry.

Stir half of the cheese into the onions, top with remaining half, and bake until browned.

30-minute Gourmet Grills

For bold, full flavor nothing beats dinner from the grill. Three dinnertime staples — tacos, steak, and burgers — get a Latin makeover showing dinner can be red-hot any night of the week.

Grilled Shrimp Tacos

While the shrimp marinates, make the sauce and slaw. Then wrap the tortillas in foil, thread the shrimp onto skewers, and grill.

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 30 minutes

FOR THE SHRIMP TACOS—

- 1/2 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tsp. chili powder
- 1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined (24)
- 8 flour tortillas (6-inch)

FOR THE CHIPOTLE SAUCE—

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise or sour cream
- 1 1/2 tsp. minced chipotle chiles in adobo sauce
- 1 1/2 tsp. honey
- 1 tsp. fresh lime juice
- Salt to taste

FOR THE RED SLAW—

- 4 cups shredded red cabbage
- 1/2 cup sliced scallions
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. distilled white vinegar
- Salt to taste

Whisk together 1/2 cup lime juice, 1 Tbsp. oil, and chili powder for the tacos. Add shrimp and chill until ready to skewer.

Preheat one side of the grill to medium-high and the other side to medium-low.

Whisk together mayonnaise, chipotles, honey, and 1 tsp. lime juice for the sauce. Season with salt and chill until ready to serve, or up to 2 days.

Combine cabbage, scallions, cilantro, 1 Tbsp. oil, and vinegar for the slaw. Season with salt and chill until ready to serve, or up to 1 hour.

Wrap tortillas in foil. Thread shrimp onto 4 metal or soaked bamboo skewers.

Grill foil-wrapped tortillas, covered, over medium-low heat, 3–4 minutes. Flip and grill 3–4 minutes more. Grill shrimp skewers, covered, over medium-high heat, 1–2 minutes per side. Remove tortillas and skewers from the grill.

To serve, divide slaw and shrimp among 8 tortillas; drizzle with sauce.

Per 2 tacos with slaw and sauce: 462 cal; 16g total fat (2g sat); 177mg chol; 802mg sodium; 34g carb; 2g fiber; 30g protein

Thread marinated shrimp onto skewers going through the tail and head to hold them in place.

Combine the oil, vinegar, and salt for the slaw dressing and toss with the cabbage mixture until coated.

Tequila Refried Beans

If the beans become too thick as they sit, thin them out with a little water.

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 20 minutes

- 1/4 cup diced white onion
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp. ground coriander
- 2 Tbsp. tequila or water
- 2 cans pinto beans, drained and rinsed (15 oz. *each*)
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Crumbled feta cheese
- Sliced serrano chile

Sauté onion in oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat until softened, 3–4 minutes. Add garlic, oregano, cumin, and coriander. Sauté 1 minute. Deglaze pan with tequila; reduce until evaporated.

Stir in beans and broth. Bring to a simmer and reduce heat to medium-low. Crush beans with a potato masher and cook until soupy, 5 minutes. Stir in lime juice, cilantro, salt, and pepper. Serve with cheese and chile slices.

Per serving: 254 cal; 6g total fat (1g sat); 5mg chol; 480mg sodium; 32g carb; 12g fiber; 13g protein

beyond ordinary steak & potatoes

Firing up the grill for the first time when the weather finally permits is exciting, especially when it involves triangle steak. Its bold taste can stand up to any spices you dish out and still come through with beefy flavor.

Once a neglected cut of meat, this steak is growing in popularity. Demand makes it hard to find but worth the hunt. If triangle steak is not an option, New York strip steaks will work. They are similar in size and shape but a bit pricier.

The steak gets extra kick from a smoked paprika rub and a bell pepper-red onion relish. Grill the steak over searing heat — that's the secret to keeping it tender and juicy.

Grilled Spanish Steak with pepper-onion relish

Grill peppers and onion first, and let them cool while the steak is grilled.

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 30 minutes

- 1 *each* red, yellow, and green bell pepper
- 1/2 red onion, wrapped in foil
- 2 Tbsp. smoked paprika
- 2 tsp. *each* kosher salt and black pepper
- 4 triangle steaks (5–6 oz. *each*)
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Preheat grill to medium-high.
Grill bell peppers and onion, covered, until peppers are charred on all sides and onion is cooked through, 10 minutes. Transfer to a bowl; cover with plastic wrap.
Combine paprika, salt, and black pepper for the rub. Coat the steaks first with the oil, and then the rub. Grill, covered, 3–4 minutes per side for medium-rare. Remove from heat, tent with foil, and rest 5 minutes.
Peel and seed the peppers, then slice peppers and onion into strips. Toss vegetable strips with vinegar, and season with salt and black pepper. Serve steaks with relish.

Per serving: 417 cal; 23g total fat (7g sat); 95mg chol; 588mg sodium; 7g carb; 2g fiber; 45g protein

steak tip:

Triangle (or tri-tip) steaks are lean cuts of beef that sit at the bottom of the sirloin area. They used to be ground into burger or cubed for stew meat. In the last few years, they've been showing up in the grocer's meat department sold as roasts or steaks, which is great for the consumer!

Grill peppers until lightly charred all over, rotating as they darken. Grill onion foil packet next to peppers.

Coat the steaks with oil before applying the rub. The oil will help the rub stick to the steaks.

Roasting the peppers and onion intensifies their flavor. Remove the skin and seeds before slicing.

Garlic-Goat Cheese Mashed Potatoes

The creaminess of these potatoes balances well with the smoky-flavored steak and tangy relish.

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 20 minutes

- 1 1/2 lb. russet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup goat cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- Salt to taste

Boil potatoes and garlic in a pot of salted water until tender, 10–12 minutes.
Drain potatoes and return to the pot to dry briefly over medium heat. Crush potatoes with a masher. Stir in butter and cheese until melted. Add chives and season with salt.

Per serving: 217 cal; 7g total fat (5g sat); 18mg chol; 435mg sodium; 34g carb; 3g fiber; 4g protein

bring on summer and juicy grilled burgers

The Cuban sandwich, or Cubano, is a popular roasted pork sandwich topped with sliced ham and Swiss cheese. Brought to the U.S. by Cuban immigrants in the early 20th century, it's sold all over Miami in restaurants and by street vendors. And it's gaining popularity across the U.S.

Our adaptation of the Cubano keeps the flavors of the classic by combining the traditional mustard and dill pickle toppings into a relish. Then we serve it atop a juicy pork burger instead of roasted pork. And the Caribbean French fries, otherwise known as tostones, mimic burger's typical side of fries.

Double-Fried Tostones

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 25 minutes

- 2 cups vegetable oil
- 2 green plantains, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- Salt, garlic powder, and chili powder to taste

Heat oil in a sauté pan to 365°. Fry plantain slices until light brown, 1–2 minutes per side. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate; let cool. **Flatten** each plantain between sheets of waxed paper with the flat side of a meat mallet. Fry tostones again, until crisp, about 1 minute per side. Transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate. Season with salt, garlic powder, and chili powder.

Per serving: 169 cal; 7g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 124mg sodium; 29g carb; 2g fiber; 1g protein

Fry the plantain slices, flatten with a meat mallet, then fry them again to get them crispy.

Cubano-Style Burgers

Loaded with great flavor, this burger brings a little bit of the unexpected to your grilling routine.

Makes 4 servings; Total time: 20 minutes

FOR THE MUSTARD RELISH—

- 1/4 cup prepared yellow mustard
- 1/4 cup dill pickle relish
- 2 Tbsp. minced red onion
- 2 Tbsp. diced pickled jalapeño
- 1 Tbsp. honey

FOR THE BURGERS—

- 1 lb. ground pork or turkey
  Salt and black pepper
- 4 slices deli-sliced ham
- 4 slices Swiss cheese
- 4 onion hamburger buns, buttered

Preheat one side of grill to medium-high and the other side to low.

Combine ingredients for the relish in a bowl; set aside.

Divide ground pork into 4 equal portions. Shape each portion into a patty slightly larger than the bun to allow for shrinkage. Season patties with salt and pepper and coat both sides of each one with nonstick spray.

Grill burgers, covered, over medium-high heat until cooked through, 3 minutes per side. Top each burger with a slice of ham and a slice of cheese. Grill, covered, until cheese is melted, 1–2 minutes more. Remove burgers from the grill and tent with foil.

Grill buttered buns, covered, over low heat until lightly toasted, 1–2 minutes. To serve, place burgers on buns, and top with mustard relish.

Per serving: 571 cal; 27g total fat (14g sat); 105mg chol; 859mg sodium; 34g carb; 1g fiber; 33g protein

By using a biscuit cutter to shape the burgers, the meat is handled less and retains its shape better.

Wait until near the end of grilling to top the burgers with the ham and Swiss cheese slices.

spicy hot fried chicken

In Tennessee, chicken shacks specialize in a spicy delicacy known simply as hot chicken. It's a tasty version of Southern fried chicken that you can easily make at home.

Naturally, hot fried chicken is spicy, but there's more to it. The best versions add seasonings in layers, using hot sauce, pepper, and herbs every step of the way. The result is a chorus of flavor, rather than one fiery note.

As with any fried chicken recipe, the first step is to marinate the chicken in buttermilk for a short time to tenderize the meat. However, I like to include Tabasco sauce as well to infuse the pieces of chicken with heat and flavor. Feel free to use another hot-pepper sauce, if you prefer.

Next, coat the marinated chicken in a savory mixture of flour, Hot Seasoning (*page 17*), and crispy Japanese bread crumbs called panko. The bread crumbs aren't traditional but add extra crunch to the crust. You can also leave them out without ill-effect.

When it's time to fry, use a large cast-iron skillet, if possible. Cast iron retains heat better than other materials, which will help the oil maintain temperature as you add the dredged chicken pieces. Avoid overcrowding the pan; cook in two batches instead.

The crowning flourish of Hot Chicken is the Hot Baste on page 17. Drizzle it on sparingly for gentle heat, or brush it on generously for a spicy burn! If you are heat sensitive, see the guideline on page 17 for how to adjust the "thermostat" to your liking.

Nashville Hot Chicken

Makes 8 pieces; Total time: 1 1/4 hours

- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 2 Tbsp. Tabasco sauce
- 1 whole chicken, cut into 8 pieces, patted dry
- Salt and black pepper
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 recipe Hot Seasoning (*page 17*)
- 2 cups peanut or vegetable oil
- 1 recipe Hot Baste (*page 17*)

Combine buttermilk and Tabasco in a large bowl.

Marinate chicken pieces in buttermilk mixture for 20 minutes, then place them on a rack set over a baking sheet; season generously with salt and pepper.

Combine flour, panko, and Hot Seasoning in a large bowl. Dredge chicken in flour mixture, shake off excess, and place on rack.

Heat oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high to 360°. Add chicken pieces, skin side down, reduce heat to medium, and fry until brown, 6–8 minutes. Flip chicken pieces, reduce heat to low, cover, and cook to an internal temperature of 165°, about 10 minutes. Uncover and cook 3–4 minutes more to crisp the coating.

Remove chicken and drain on paper towels. Fry remaining chicken in the same manner.

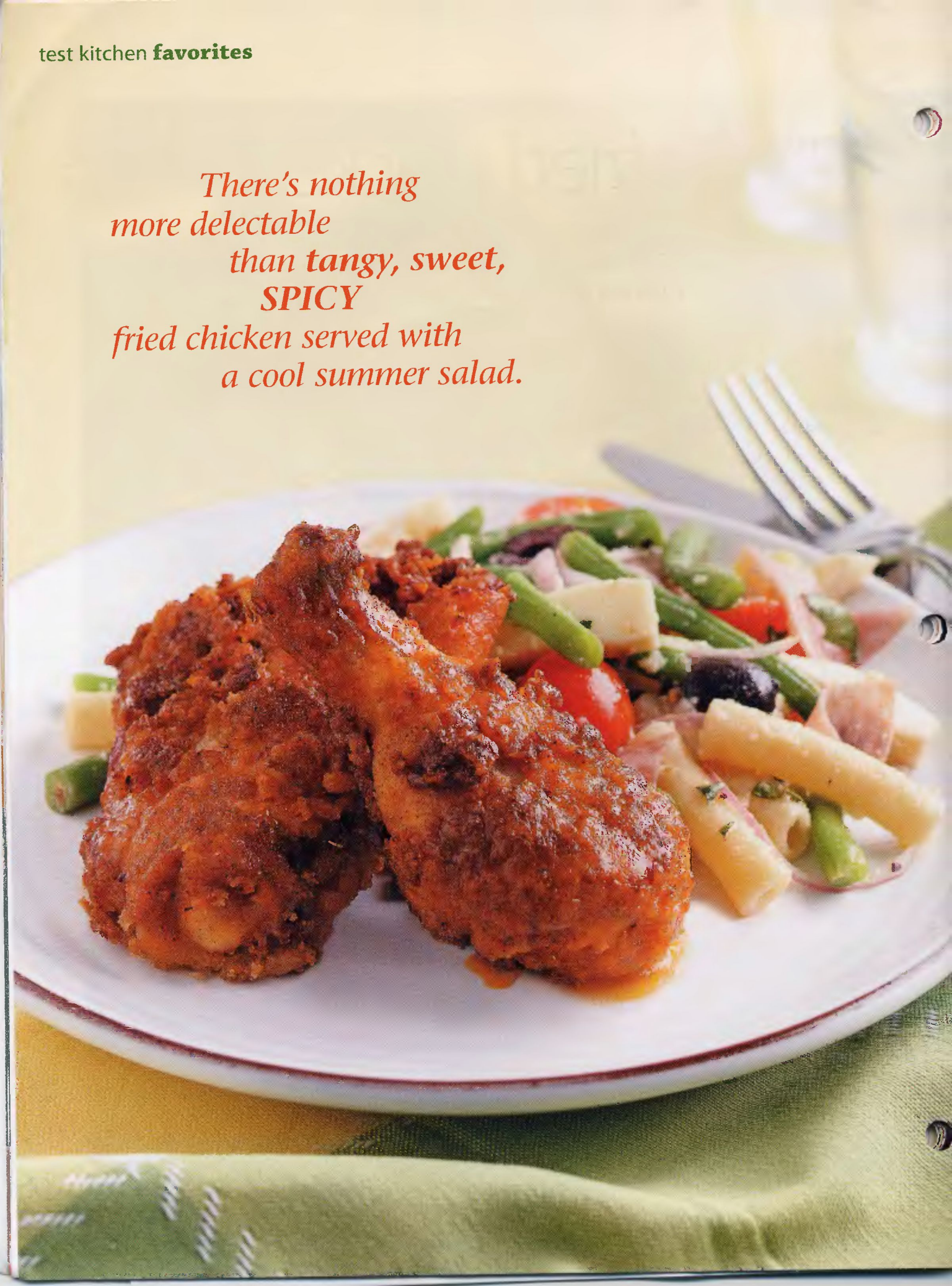
Brush or drizzle fried chicken with Hot Baste.

Per two pieces (1 drumstick, 1 piece breast): 539 cal; 32g total fat (10g sat); 137mg chol; 459mg sodium; 27g carb; 0g fiber; 36g protein

The buttermilk-Tabasco marinade tenderizes the chicken while adding heat and flavor.

Dredge chicken in flour mixture, then shake off excess flour and place on a rack while oil heats.

There's nothing more delectable than ***tangy, sweet, SPICY*** *fried chicken served with a cool summer salad.*



heat & spice index

Hot chicken doesn't have to be an inferno. Adjust the recipe to your liking with this guide for tamping the fire.
Mild: Leave Tabasco out of the marinade, leave cayenne out of the seasoning, and skip the baste entirely.
1-Alarm: Use two teaspoons Tabasco in the marinade, leave cayenne out of the seasoning, and drizzle sparingly with baste.
2-Alarm: Use one tablespoon Tabasco in the marinade, a pinch of cayenne in the seasoning, and brush lightly with baste.
3-Alarm: Leave recipe as is and brush generously with baste!

Hot Seasoning

This mixture can be made ahead and stored in an airtight container.

Makes 3 Tbsp.; Total time: 5 minutes

- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. onion powder
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

Combine paprika, chili powder, oregano, basil, onion powder, garlic powder, black pepper, salt, and cayenne pepper in a clean coffee grinder and process until herbs are pulverized.

Pulverizing spices in a coffee grinder intensifies flavor but isn't essential. Skip this step for a milder mixture.

Hot Baste

In the Test Kitchen, we used Tabasco sauce in the baste, but feel free to try your favorite hot-pepper sauce.

Makes 1/2 cup; Total time: 5 minutes

- 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1/4 cup Tabasco sauce
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. garlic powder

Combine butter, Tabasco, honey, and garlic powder in a small bowl until well-blended.

Drizzle or brush the baste on the just-fried chicken, then let it soak in. Serve chicken with remaining baste.

Hot Chicken Skewers

Makes 12 skewers
Total time: 1 hour

- 1/2 cup buttermilk
- 2 Tbsp. Tabasco sauce
- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, rinsed, patted dry
- Salt and black pepper
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 recipe Hot Seasoning, *left*
- 2 cups peanut or vegetable oil
- 1 recipe Hot Baste, *left*

Combine buttermilk and Tabasco in a large bowl.
Cut each chicken breast into 4 lengthwise strips. Thread twelve 8-inch skewers with one strip each.
Marinate chicken in buttermilk mixture 20 minutes, then place on a rack set over a baking sheet; season with salt and pepper.
Combine flour, panko, and Hot Seasoning in a shallow dish. Dredge chicken skewers in flour mixture, shake off excess, and return to rack.
Heat oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high to 360°. Add skewers, reduce heat to medium, and fry until chicken strips brown, 5 minutes. Turn skewers over and fry until brown, about 5 minutes more.

Remove and drain skewers on paper towels. Fry remaining skewers in the same manner.
Brush or drizzle skewers with Hot Baste. Serve with remaining baste.

Per skewer: 182 cal; 9g total fat (3g sat); 35mg chol; 202mg sodium; 14g carb; 0g fiber; 11g protein

Simply Delicious
side dishes of summer

Potato salad, pasta salad, fruit salad, deviled eggs, and lemonade — sounds like summer, doesn't it? You can't go wrong with classic versions of these simple, tried-and-true side kicks. But if you want to shake things up at your next potluck or picnic, give these recipe combos a try. Each dish is a blend of two summer favorites (a two-for-one of sorts).

One unique thing about this potato salad is the way the potatoes are sliced. Use a mandoline to cut them into super thin disks, a lot like a scalloped dish. To complete the fusion, the sweet and salty flavors of a pea-bacon-Cheddar salad are mixed in to make a side that goes with any summer meal.

Who wouldn't love a combo of fresh-squeezed lemonade and a slice of sweet watermelon? That's what you get in this from-scratch lemonade. Served in canning jars, it's just right for a casual gathering. Turn the page for more summer fusions — perfect for toting to picnics or your own backyard.

Potato-Pea Salad

This recipe proves that the combination of two favorite salads can result in a new creation whose sum — and taste — is greater than its parts.

Makes 12 servings (6 cups); Total time: 25 minutes

- 4 strips bacon
- 1 1/2 lb. russet potatoes, peeled (4 potatoes)
- 1 1/2 cups frozen peas, thawed
- 1/2 cup diced Cheddar (4 oz.)
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 Tbsp. prepared yellow mustard
- 1/4 tsp. onion powder
- Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

A mandoline makes quick work of slicing the quartered potatoes. You can also slice them with a knife.

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil for the potatoes.

Cook bacon until very crisp; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Crumble bacon; set aside.

Quarter potatoes. Carefully run each quarter along a mandoline to cut into 1/8- to 1/4-inch-thick slices, or thinly slice potatoes with a knife. (If slicing with a mandoline, always use the safety guard as the potato pieces become smaller.)

Boil sliced potatoes until tender but not mushy, about 5 minutes. Rinse potatoes to remove excess starch and drain well; transfer to a large bowl. Add peas and Cheddar; toss gently to mix.

Combine mayonnaise, mustard, and onion powder in a separate bowl. Gently fold mayonnaise mixture into potato mixture. Season with salt and cayenne. Chill until ready to serve. Before serving, sprinkle bacon over salad.

Per 1/2 cup: 180 cal; 11g total fat (3g sat); 15mg chol; 357mg sodium; 15g carb; 2g fiber; 5g protein

Watermelon Lemonade

Depending on your preference, use more or less lemon juice to taste.

Makes 8 cups
Total time: 15 minutes

- 1 cup torn fresh mint leaves
- 3/4 cup plus 1 Tbsp. sugar, divided
- 4 3/4 cups cold water, divided
- 5 cups diced seedless watermelon
- 1 1/2 cups fresh lemon juice, strained

Muddle mint and 1 Tbsp. sugar in the bottom of a large pitcher.

Simmer remaining 3/4 cup sugar and 3/4 cup water in a small saucepan over medium heat for the simple syrup. Heat, stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves, 5 minutes; let cool.

Purée watermelon in a blender until liquefied. Strain watermelon juice through a coarse-mesh sieve to remove any seeds or solids.

Combine watermelon juice, lemon juice, and simple syrup in pitcher with mint. Add 4 cups cold water; stir until combined.

Pour lemonade into 6- or 8-oz. jars; top with lids. Serve over ice to chill.

Per 3/4-cup serving: 57 cal; 0g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 2mg sodium; 18g carb; 1g fiber; 0g protein

spectacular sides
full of summer flavors

These eggs may be more devilish than you're used to. They incorporate two flavorful summer condiments: barbecue sauce and pickles. You may want to make a double batch because they're guaranteed to go fast!

And don't pass up this play on three-bean salad. Bean-shaped ziti pasta stands in for the third bean (we're betting no one will miss the classic waxed beans) and this way you get to experience the best parts of Italian pasta salad — the olives, salami, and cheese.

For a refreshing take on fruit salad, try a slaw version. It combines the cut and crunch of cole slaw with summer's sweetest flavors.

BBQ Deviled Eggs
with pickles & parsley

Makes 24 deviled eggs
Total time: 15 minutes

- 12 hard-cooked eggs, peeled, cut in half, and yolks removed
- 2 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp. prepared yellow mustard
- 1 Tbsp. barbecue sauce
- 3 Tbsp. minced dill gherkin pickles
- 2 Tbsp. minced sweet onion
- 2 Tbsp. minced fresh parsley
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Barbecue sauce for drizzling
- Parsley leaves and sliced gherkins for garnish

Carefully rinse and pat dry halved egg whites to remove any yolk. **Mash** egg yolks in a bowl; stir in cream cheese, mayonnaise, mustard, barbecue sauce, 3 Tbsp. minced pickles, onion, and 2 Tbsp. parsley. Season mixture with salt and pepper; stir until ingredients are well combined. Divide filling among egg whites. **Drizzle** barbecue sauce lightly over each egg. Garnish each egg with a parsley leaf and small pickle slice.

Per deviled egg: 65 cal; 5g total fat (2g sat); 109mg chol; 85mg sodium; 1g carb; 0g fiber; 3g protein

deviled egg tips

- Turn a carton of eggs on its side in the refrigerator the night before you plan to cook them. This will center the yolks, making your deviled eggs look prettier and less lopsided.
- The fresher the egg, the harder it is to peel. For the best peeling success, use eggs that are about 7 to 10 days old.
- Light cream cheese and mayo can be used in the filling without much difference in taste. But don't substitute creamy salad dressing. It's too thin and sweet.

For easy piping, spoon filling into a heavy-duty plastic bag. Cut a small hole in the corner; squeeze gently.

"Three" Bean Pasta Salad

Make the salad ahead, then toss it with the dressing just before serving. Remember to keep all of these side dishes chilled until you're ready to eat.

Makes 12 servings (6 cups); Total time: 20 minutes

FOR THE SALAD—

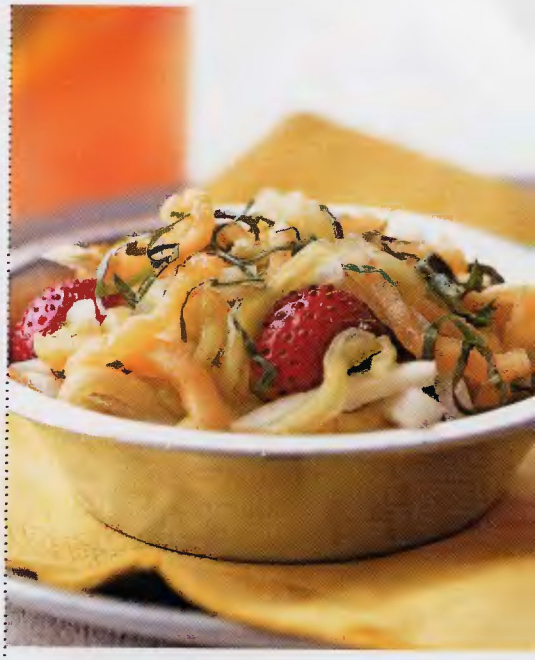
- 2 cups dry ziti pasta (4 oz.)
- 2 cups fresh green beans, trimmed (12 oz.)
- 1 can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed (15 oz.)
- 2 oz. deli-sliced Genoa salami, chopped
- 2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup pitted, sliced black olives
- 4 oz. fresh mozzarella, cubed
- 1/4 cup minced fresh basil
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE—

- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta according to package directions. Use a slotted spoon to transfer cooked pasta to a colander. Cook green beans in same boiling water until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes; drain. Rinse pasta and green beans under cool water; transfer to a large bowl. **Add** garbanzo beans, salami, tomatoes, onion, olives, mozzarella, basil, and parsley to bowl with pasta; toss until well combined. **Combine** vinaigrette ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid; shake until well mixed. **Drizzle** vinaigrette over salad just before serving; toss until evenly coated. Serve cold.

Per 1/2 cup: 187 cal; 9g total fat (3g sat); 12mg chol; 274mg sodium; 17g carb; 3g fiber; 8g protein



Summer Fruit Slaw with lime syrup

Makes 12 servings (6 cups)
Total time: 25 minutes

FOR THE LIME SYRUP—

- 2 Tbsp. minced lime zest
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar

FOR THE FRUIT—

- 2 cups julienned cantaloupe
- 2 cups julienned honeydew
- 2 cups julienned jicama
- 2 cups sliced strawberries
- 1/4 cup thinly sliced basil

Simmer zest, lime juice, sugar, and vinegar for the syrup in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves and mixture reduces by half, about 10 minutes. **Place** cut cantaloupe and honeydew in a colander to drain excess liquid while syrup reduces. (A salad spinner works well for removing liquid, as well.) **Toss** together cantaloupe, honeydew, jicama, strawberries, and basil. Drizzle lime syrup over salad; toss before serving.

Per 1/2 cup: 47 cal; 0g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 10mg sodium; 12g carb; 2g fiber; 1g protein

Blueberries

Naturally blue food is an anomaly, indicating there's more to these berries than meets the eye — they're one of the healthiest foods you could ever eat.

Try to name a blue food other than blueberries. No, blue sports drinks and dyed candies don't count. I'm talking naturally grown, true blue. It's not easy to do. Their deep ocean color is what makes these berries so unique, and it's also what makes them so good for you.

Researchers at the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging have discovered that blueberries contain one of the highest levels of antioxidant activity among almost all fruits and vegetables — even higher than most other types of berries.

Why So Blue? Blueberries get their signature color from a pigment called anthocyanin, which contains polyphenols (a type of antioxidant). The darker, deeper blue or purple a berry is in color, the higher the polyphenol count, and the higher the antioxidant power.

Though our bodies have their own way of making antioxidants, we still need to eat foods that are rich sources of them. Our bodies can't generate several of the essential antioxidants, such as vitamins C, E, or manganese. Luckily, there are many natural foods that contain these, and blueberries are a good source of all three.

The #1 Super Food Antioxidants aren't the only healthful substance found in blueberries. Several lab studies performed in recent years have shown that blueberries do, indeed, belong on everyone's list of super foods — and they may just deserve the crowning title among those competitive foods known for slowing aging and fighting disease.

The studies show that blueberries provide the same bacteria-blocking substance as cranberries to help guard against urinary tract infection. Nutrients in blueberries can also have anti-inflammatory effects that reduce the risk of heart disease and certain cancers. What's more, they're good for your brain! Blueberries can improve brain function, helping to prevent Alzheimer's and dementia.

Beyond Breakfast, Before Dessert It's a shame most serving suggestions for blueberries stop after the usual suspects: muffins, pancakes, and as a topper for oatmeal and ice cream.

The subtly sweet flavor and crisp-tender texture of blueberries makes them perfect for dishes and meals of all types. For something a little different, try serving blueberries in the sweet-spicy barbecue sauce and the fresh corn and blueberry salad on page 23. When served in such a seasonal and healthy way, this one-of-a-kind super food is sure to cure anyone's case of the blues.

What's an antioxidant?

You've heard of antioxidants and you know they're good for you, but do you know how they work and why? Here's a quick overview.

Antioxidants are the self-sacrificing super cops of the body. As free radicals (harmful molecules of oxygen) circulate in the body, available antioxidants attach to them, rendering them harmless. If free radicals are left to roam, they'll eventually destroy body cells. As we age, the danger of free radicals becomes more serious, and a diet rich in antioxidants becomes more important.

Grilled Pork Chops
with blueberry bbq sauce

This unique sauce provides both a touch of sweetness and a kick of heat. Delicious with pork, it can amp up the flavor of any grilled meat.

Makes 4 servings, 1 cup sauce
Total time: about 30 minutes

FOR THE SAUCE—

- 1/2 cup minced shallots
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp. water or lemon juice

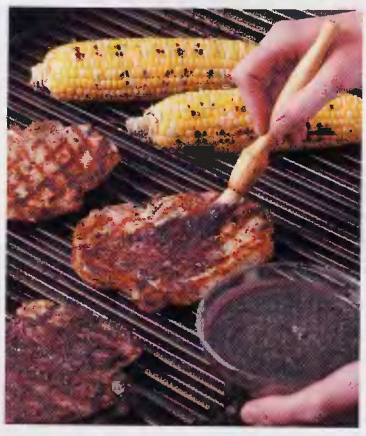
FOR THE PORK CHOPS—

- 4 bone-in pork chops (6–8 oz. *each*)
- Salt and black pepper

Preheat grill to medium-high. Brush grill grate with oil.
Sauté shallots and jalapeño in oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat until soft, about 2 minutes. Add blueberries, vinegar, brown sugar, Dijon, garlic powder, and salt; simmer until sauce thickens, 2–3 minutes.
Transfer mixture to a blender or food processor; pulse until puréed. Return sauce to pan over medium heat. Stir in water; simmer sauce 1–2 minutes more, stirring often. Remove sauce from heat; set aside.
Season pork with salt and pepper. Grill pork, covered, over direct heat until an instant-read thermometer registers 155°, about 6 minutes per side. Remove pork from grill and tent with foil; let rest 5 minutes. Serve pork with sauce on the side. If desired, brush some of the sauce over pork during grilling.

Per serving with 1/4 cup sauce: 365 cal; 15g total fat (4g sat); 71mg chol; 355mg sodium; 28g carb; 2g fiber; 30g protein

The sauce is thick enough when a wooden spoon drawn along the bottom of the pan leaves a trail.



If desired, brush a little sauce over pork during last minute of grilling. Serve remaining sauce on the side.

Blueberry Salad
with arugula & grilled corn

Blueberries add the perfect amount of sweetness to this simple, fresh salad. For an easy meal, grill the corn alongside the pork.

Makes 4 cups
Total time: 10 minutes

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE—

- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste

FOR THE SALAD—

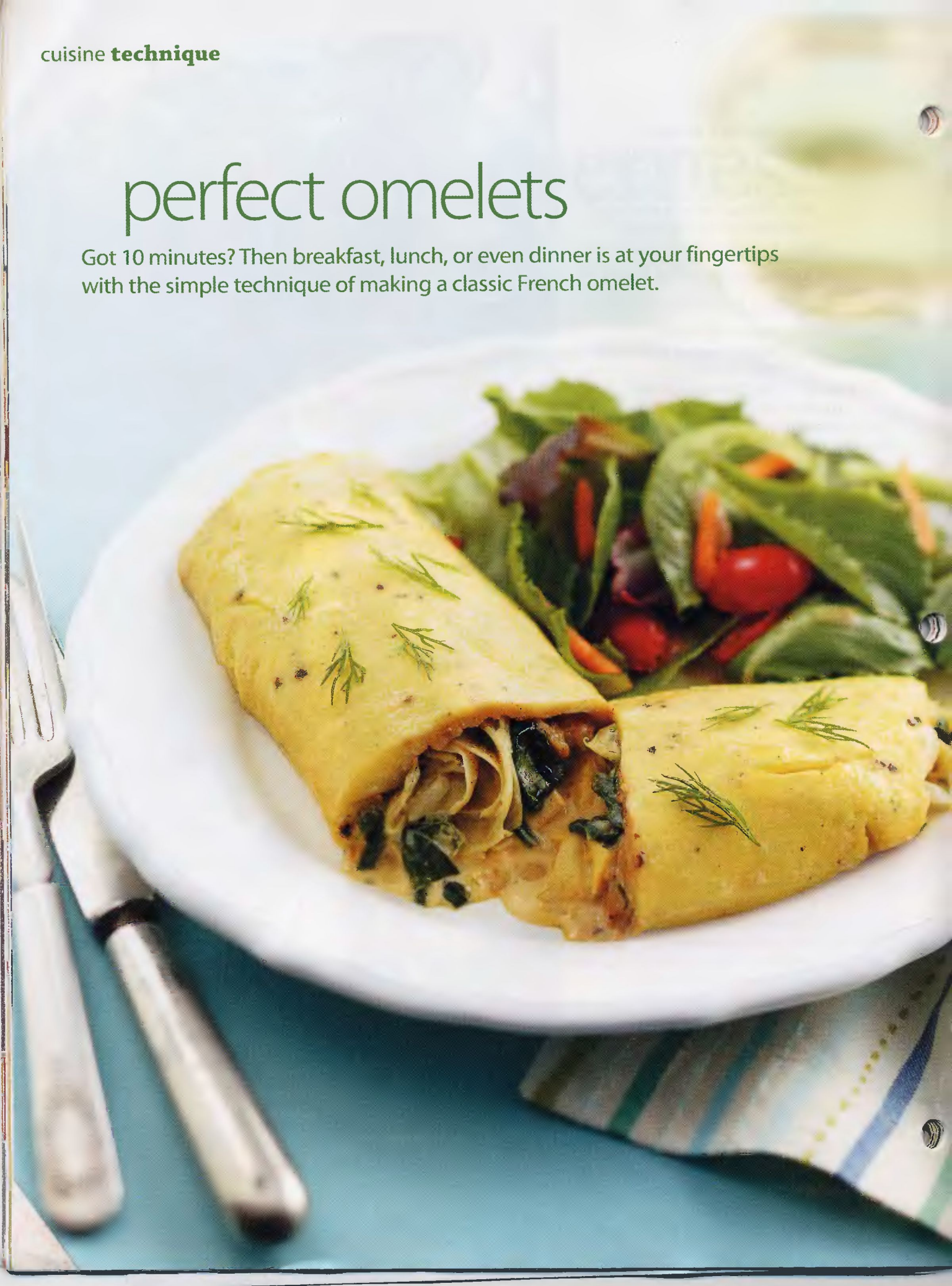
- 2 ears sweet corn, grilled
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 4 cups arugula
- 1/2 cup sliced scallions

Whisk together vinegar, lemon juice, and oil until well mixed. Season with salt and pepper.
Cut the kernels off the ears of grilled corn.
Toss together corn kernels, blueberries, arugula, and scallions. Before serving, drizzle vinaigrette over salad; toss until evenly coated.

Per cup: 106 cal; 5g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 68mg sodium; 15g carb; 3g fiber; 3g protein

perfect omelets

Got 10 minutes? Then breakfast, lunch, or even dinner is at your fingertips with the simple technique of making a classic French omelet.



Get cracking

If you can scramble eggs, you can make omelets. To get started you need only eggs, milk or half-and-half, a filling of your choice, and butter or nonstick spray.

There are nearly as many methods for making omelets as there are omelet makers, but one of the fastest and easiest is the stirred French omelet.

A few things distinguish these omelets from others. First, because they're cooked quickly over higher heat they should be pale yellow with no browning. Second, the constant stirring of the eggs along with shaking the skillet yields a smooth, tender omelet with a creamy center. It should be set but still look wet when you add your filling, which will be nicely tucked inside these folded omelets.

If you need a little help in the filling department, or you'd just like to explore your options, check out our suggestions on the next pages. But for now it's time to get those eggs and start cracking!

Basic Omelet

Omelets are so easy that you can make several in quick succession, but any fillings must be fully prepared before you crack an egg.

Makes 1 omelet
Total time: 10 minutes

- 3 eggs
- 2 Tbsp. half-and-half, milk, or water
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- Salt and black pepper
- 1/4–1/3 cup desired filling (*pages 26–27*)

Whisk together eggs and half-and-half in a small bowl just until blended.

Melt butter in an 8-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until it's bubbling.

Pour egg mixture into the skillet and season with salt and pepper. Immediately begin gently shaking the skillet back and forth while making small, quick stirring motions. Reduce heat to low when eggs no longer run but still are moist.

Add filling in a line perpendicular to the skillet handle. Fold 1/3 of the omelet over the filling, then slide the exposed third of the omelet from the edge of the pan onto a serving plate, folding the rest of the omelet over on it. Let rest for 1 minute before serving.

Per omelet: 338 cal; 24g total fat (11g sat); 573mg chol; 344mg sodium; 6g carb; 0g fiber; 20g protein

master technique: tools & steps

For guaranteed success, a nonstick skillet is essential. An 8- to 10-inch skillet is ideal for a three-egg omelet — any smaller and the omelet is too thick to fold; any bigger and the omelet is likely to be very thin and stick to the skillet.

1. Simultaneously shake skillet forward and back while stirring eggs vigorously. When edges are set, tilt the skillet to roll any still-liquid eggs to the edges to set.

2. Once all the eggs are set but still moist, sprinkle the filling perpendicular to the skillet handle (this makes folding easier in the next step).

3. Loosen the eggs around the edge, hold the skillet with an underhand grip (tilting it up), and fold the back third of the omelet over the filling.

4. Slide the exposed third of the omelet off the edge of the pan onto a plate. Fold the rest of the omelet over on it. Let rest 1 minute before serving.

Explore your options

The versatility of omelets is one of their biggest selling points. You can customize their fillings to make them appropriate for any meal of the day and to satisfy anyone at your table — with few ingredients and in little time.

Corned beef hash and huevos rancheros are popular breakfast dishes all on their own, but they also make excellent omelet fillings. Just remember to keep the size of the pieces in them on the small side, so the omelets are easier to fold and less likely to tear when folding.

If you prefer a less hearty omelet for brunch or dinner, the Spinach-Artichoke Filling on page 27 can't be beat. Or keep things simple with a filling of your favorite cheese and herbs. The possibilities are endless, but if you need a little inspiration, *see box, below, right.*

Corned Beef Hash Filling
with spicy ketchup

If you have leftover cooked corned beef, use it. Otherwise, ask for one 8-ounce slice at the deli counter and then dice it yourself.

Makes filling for 4 omelets; Total time: 45 minutes

FOR THE HASH FILLING—

- 1 Yukon gold potato, peeled and diced small
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 tsp. *each* paprika and dried oregano
- 1 cup diced cooked corned beef
- Salt and black pepper to taste

FOR THE SPICY KETCHUP—

- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. Tabasco sauce

Sauté potatoes in oil in a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until golden, about 15 minutes. Add onion, bell pepper, paprika, oregano, and corned beef, and cook until onions begin to soften, 5 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside.

Combine ketchup, Dijon, cilantro, Worcestershire, and Tabasco for the spicy ketchup in a bowl; set aside.

To serve, prepare omelet according to directions, *page 25,* and fill with hash filling. Spoon 2 Tbsp. spicy ketchup on omelet.

Per omelet: 488 cal; 29g total fat (12g sat); 603mg chol; 1172mg sodium; 20g carb; 1g fiber; 31g protein

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

The beauty of omelets is you can fill them with nearly anything. Here are a few old standbys and some new favorites to try.

DENVER This western classic is on every breakfast menu. Diced ham, onion, bell pepper, and cheese are totally at home on the range in these omelets.

BLT Summer's favorite sandwich gets a new look. Fold cooked bacon, chopped tomatoes, and shredded lettuce into your next omelet.

GREEK Feta, cherry tomatoes, oregano, and a little lemon zest give this omelet Mediterranean flair.

HERB & CHEESE Try a favorite cheese like goat, Cheddar, or Parmesan with a mixture of chopped fresh chives, parsley, chervil, and tarragon.

CALIFORNIA Lump crab meat and chopped avocado topped with a squeeze of lime juice reign supreme in these beachy omelets.

Huevos Rancheros Omelets

Breakfast sausage and cheese fill these omelets, while salsa and beans round out the plate for a hearty breakfast. Try chorizo for a dinner option.

Makes 4 omelets; Total time: 20 minutes

FOR THE FILLINGS—

- 8 oz. breakfast pork sausage
- 1 cup shredded pepper Jack cheese, divided

FOR THE SAUCE—

- 2 cups purchased salsa
- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed (15 oz.)
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

FOR THE OMELETS—

- 12 eggs, divided
- 4 Tbsp. sour cream, divided
- Additional sour cream
- Chopped fresh cilantro

Brown the sausage in a skillet; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate and set aside.

Heat salsa in a saucepan over medium heat until warm. Stir in beans and cilantro; keep warm over low heat.

Whisk together 3 eggs and 1 Tbsp. sour cream for the first omelet. Cook according to directions, *page 25*, using browned sausage and pepper Jack cheese as fillings.

To serve, spoon sauce on serving plate, top with omelet, and garnish with a dollop of sour cream and cilantro. Repeat to make 3 more omelets.

Per omelet: 747 cal; 50g total fat (22g sat); 646mg chol; 1270mg sodium; 28g carb; 5g fiber; 40g protein

Spinach-Artichoke Filling

Makes filling for 6 omelets
Total time: 20 minutes

- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1 can quartered artichoke hearts, drained (13.75 oz.)
- 4 oz. cream cheese
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh dill
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh chives
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- Minced zest of 1 lemon
- 3 cups fresh spinach
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Chopped fresh dill

Sweat onion in oil and butter in a sauté pan over medium-low heat until onions begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and pepper flakes; cook 1 minute more. Stir in artichoke hearts; cook to warm.

Add cream cheese and cream to the pan, stirring until cream cheese melts. Stir in 2 Tbsp. dill, chives, parsley, and zest.

Stir in spinach; cook until it begins to wilt. Season with salt and black pepper; keep warm.

To serve, prepare omelet according to directions, *page 25*, and fill with 1/6 of filling recipe. Garnish with chopped dill.

Per omelet: 540 cal; 43g total fat (19g sat); 612mg chol; 610mg sodium; 14g carb; 3g fiber; 22g protein

a fresh & bright seafood menu

Subtle citrus flavors tie this menu together from start to finish. It's a satisfying meal for only 650 calories — and that includes dessert!

Lite Seafood Menu *for 4*

Lemon Steamed Halibut with radish sauce

Barley-Brown Rice Salad with cucumbers & basil-orange pesto

Lemon Pudding Cakes with fresh blueberries

Light and lemony are the words of choice when it comes to this summer seafood menu. It borders on the line between casual and sophisticated. You could just as easily serve it on a weeknight as you could for guests on the weekend — either way, be sure to dine al fresco with a glass of crisp white wine (see our picks on page 30).

The unexpected ingredient here is definitely the sautéed radishes. Now, if you're not a radish fan, don't turn the page just yet. You must try them in this simple preparation — they're simmered in broth and finished with just a touch of butter to create a unique and rich-tasting sauce. Prepared this way, radishes lose their raw, spicy qualities but maintain a bit of crunch, and they pick up great savory notes along the way.

The entire menu — meaty halibut fillets, a whole-grain and pesto salad, plus lemon pudding cakes for dessert — boasts of these fresh, clean flavors. And it all pairs nicely with a warm summer breeze.

steaming **fresh fish**

Steaming is the perfect technique for cooking delicate foods like white-flesh fish fillets. The rising steam from water boiling below the food holds an almost steady temperature of 212 degrees, which cooks fish at a rate of about seven minutes per inch of thickness. Ask your local fishmonger to cut square- or rectangle-shaped fillets that are of even thickness throughout so they'll cook evenly.

You can use a steamer pan (ours is designed to fit over a saucepan, double-boiler style), a bamboo steamer, or a metal steamer insert to hold the fish. Be sure to place something between the fish and the bottom of the steamer basket. We used parchment, but a bed of fresh herbs, large lettuce leaves, or a round plate would also work.

Lemon Steamed Halibut with radish sauce

Halibut fillets are thick and meaty yet light and flaky at the same time. They're especially delicious after absorbing the flavors of lemon and a rich radish sauce.

Calories: 189
Makes 4 servings; Total time: about 30 minutes

FOR THE LEMON SALT—

- 2 pieces dried lemon peel*
- 2 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1/2 tsp. white pepper

FOR THE FISH—

- 4 halibut fillets, skin removed (about 5 oz. *each*)
- 4 large basil leaves

FOR THE RADISH SAUCE—

- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 shallot, minced
- 2 cups radishes, rinsed and sliced into coins (7–8 oz.)
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. unsalted butter
- Salt and white pepper to taste

Pulse lemon peel, salt, and white pepper in a spice grinder until coarsely ground. Sprinkle 1/4 tsp. of the lemon salt over each fillet. Top each fillet with a basil leaf.

Bring broth, water, and shallot for the sauce to a boil in a saucepan over medium heat. Continue to boil, uncovered, 2–3 minutes. Add radishes and lemon juice; simmer until liquid is almost completely reduced, about 10 minutes. Add butter to pan, stirring to coat the radishes; season radishes with salt and white pepper.

Cut a piece of parchment to fit the bottom of a large steamer basket; place steamer over a pan of water. Bring water to a gentle boil.

Set fillets on parchment, making sure they don't touch. Cover steamer and cook fish until it flakes easily with a fork, 5–7 minutes.

Divide radish sauce among four plates. Set one fillet over radishes on each plate.

Per serving: 189 cal; 5g total fat (2g sat, 2g mono, 1g poly); 51mg chol; 594mg sodium; 3g carb (1g fiber, 1g total sugars); 31g protein; 2mg iron; 82mg calcium

* *To dry lemon peel, use a vegetable peeler to cut two 1-inch strips (yellow part only) off the outer peel of a lemon. Let strips sit at room temperature (or in an oven on low) for 1 hour to dry. Use remaining lemon salt to season any vegetable or seafood dish.*

Grind lemon peel, salt, and white pepper to a coarse powder making sure some larger peel pieces remain.

It takes only a few teaspoons of butter to finish the fresh radish sauce and give it a rich flavor boost.

The fillets will cook quickly once the water steams. It's easy to overcook them; set a timer and check often.

fresh complements

Whole grains never tasted as fresh and summery as they do in this simple side dish. For faster prep, cook and chill the barley and rice up to one day ahead. Sure, you can use just one grain or the other, but the combination of the two adds nice depth and more nutrition.

The Lemon Pudding Cakes on page 31 are a heavenly way to end the meal. They're like a cross between a lemon bar and an airy soufflé. Pop them in the oven before preparing the fish and they'll be warm and ready at the end of the meal. Everyone will love diving through the pillowy cake to retrieve spoonfuls of sweet pudding and fresh blueberries at the bottom!

Barley-Brown Rice Salad
with cucumbers & basil-orange pesto

Fresh-from-the-garden flavors pair beautifully with whole grains and citrus.

Calories: 254
Makes 4 servings (4 cups); Total time: 25 minutes

FOR THE SALAD—

- 1/2 cup dry regular or quick-cook barley
- 1/2 cup dry regular or quick-cook brown rice
- 1 cup diced cucumber

FOR THE PESTO—

- 1 cup packed fresh basil leaves
- 1/4 cup hazelnuts
- 2 cloves garlic
- Zest and juice of 1 orange
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt

Cook barley and brown rice in separate saucepans according to package directions. After cooking, rinse grains under cool water; set aside in a colander to drain.

Pulse basil, hazelnuts, garlic, zest, and juice in a food processor or mini food chopper until finely minced. Drizzle in oil and continue to pulse until pesto is blended; season with salt.

Toss grains with cucumber and pesto until coated. Season with more salt, if desired. Serve at room temperature.

Per serving: 254 cal; 8g total fat (1g sat, 5g mono, 2g poly); 0mg chol; 77mg sodium; 38g carb (6g fiber, 2g total sugars); 6g protein; 2mg iron; 41mg calcium

Use a microplane to grate fresh orange zest for the pesto. Mix pesto with grains just before serving.

For a fancy presentation, score the cucumber several times with a zester or fork before dicing it.

LIGHT & CRISP WHITE WINES

Pair any of these white wines with seafood dinners all summer long.

- **Pinot Grigio (Pinot Gris)** tend to be the lightest of white wines. Most have flavors similar to Sauvignon Blanc, but they're more muted and delicate. **Editor's Pick:** McManis, California, $12.
- **Sauvignon Blanc** are fruitier than other whites. Australian/New Zealand varietals are peppery and herby, while California styles often are citrusy. **Editor's Pick:** Pomelo, California, $12.
- **Unoaked Chardonnay** is lighter and crisper than Oaked Chardonnay, which is buttery. We like Unoaked Chards for their clean flavor and versatility. **Editor's Pick:** Laforet Bourgogne, France, $14.

Lemon Pudding Cakes with fresh blueberries

The hands-on time for making these cakes is less than 10 minutes! They're delicious served cool, but even better when still warm from the oven.

Calories: 206
Makes 4 cakes
Total time: about 1 hour

- 2 eggs, separated
- 1–2 tsp. minced lemon zest
- 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 tsp. unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 5 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. table salt
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup fresh blueberries
- Powdered sugar

Beat together egg yolks, zest, lemon juice, butter, and sugar in a large bowl with a hand mixer on medium speed. Combine flour and salt in a separate bowl.

Add flour mixture alternately with milk to yolk mixture, beating well after each addition.

Beat egg whites in a separate bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold whites into lemon batter until incorporated.

Place four 6-oz. ovenproof ramekins or dessert cups in an 8-inch square baking pan with tall sides.

Drop a few blueberries into the bottom of each ramekin. Divide batter among ramekins, pouring batter over berries.

Pour boiling water into baking pan until water reaches halfway up the sides of ramekins. Bake for 40 minutes or until tops of cakes are lightly browned. Remove baking pan from oven; transfer ramekins to a cooling rack for 10 minutes.

To serve, sprinkle powdered sugar over tops of cakes.

Per cake: 206 cal; 5g total fat (2g sat, 2g mono, 1g poly); 99mg chol; 200mg sodium; 39g carb (0g fiber, 31g total sugars); 6g protein; 1mg iron; 69mg calcium

Gently fold the whipped egg whites into the lemon mixture, lifting the batter from bottom to top.

Pour hot water into the pan in the space around the ramekins until water level is halfway up the sides.

patio Dinner Menu

Easy, elegant, and with flavors as big as all outdoors, this menu for two proves simple grilled steak really stacks up.

There might not be a better way to break into the grilling season than with a flat iron steak. The flat iron is a very tender cut from the shoulder, meaning it also has a big beefy flavor. It's relatively new to the marketplace so if you have trouble getting your hands on it, it's fine to use top sirloin instead.

Fresh cilantro-onion pesto is the tie that binds this simple steak and pasta menu together — it garnishes the steak and tomatoes while also flavoring the pasta. The beauty of the pesto is the different flavor dynamic it brings to each element of the menu — herb to the pasta, onion to the steak, and almond to the cheese.

Cilantro-Onion Pesto

Sweet onion is the highlight of this pesto, so if cilantro isn't your thing, it's okay to use parsley instead.

Makes 1 cup; Total time: 10 minutes

- 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- 1/2 bunch fresh cilantro
- 1/2 cup diced sweet onion (such as Vidalia)
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Toast almonds in a small sauté pan over medium heat until golden, about 7 minutes, stirring often. Remove from pan to cool.
Pulse almonds, cilantro, onion, Parmesan, oil, lime juice, and garlic in a food processor, then purée. Season with salt and pepper. Toss with Pesto Pasta (*page 34*) and serve with Steak Stacks, *right*.

Per Tbsp.: 51 cal; 4g total fat (1g sat); 2mg chol; 46mg sodium; 2g carb; 1g fiber; 2g protein

Pulse the cilantro, stems and all, to chop it and the other ingredients, before puréeing them.

Steak Stacks
with tomatoes and fresh mozzarella

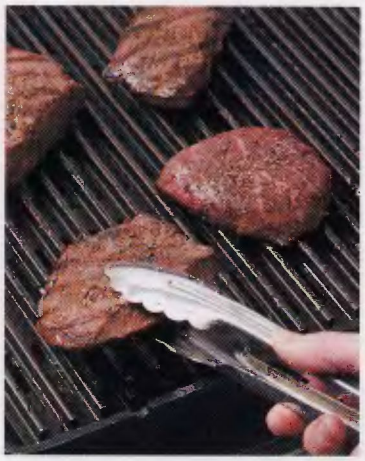
The nice thing about this main dish is that it can all be assembled on the grill, plated, and brought directly to the table.

Makes 2 servings; Total time: 20 minutes

- 4 tomato slices
- 2 flat iron beef steaks (8–10 oz. *each*)
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 slices fresh mozzarella cheese (about 2 oz. *each*)

Preheat grill to high. Brush grill grate with oil.
Cut each steak in half crosswise and season with salt and pepper.
Grill steaks, covered, 3–5 minutes per side for medium-rare, or to desired doneness. Grill tomato slices alongside the steak during the last few minutes of grilling, flipping once.
To assemble, place a cheese slice and a tomato slice on two steaks. Top each steak-cheese-tomato stack with remaining steak halves and tomato slices; carefully remove from grill to serving plates. Top with Cilantro-Onion Pesto, *left*. Serve with Pesto Pasta (*page 34*).

Per serving: 595 cal; 36g total fat (16g sat); 180mg chol; 612mg sodium; 6g carb; 1g fiber; 58g protein



Flat iron steaks are naturally thin, so they will grill quickly and evenly to the desired degree of doneness.

Place the cheese on two of the steaks and then top with grilled tomato slices to start melting it.

simplicity defined, side and dessert...

For proof that sides and dessert can be super simple, look no farther than the Pesto Pasta, *right*. Draining the pasta cooking water over the spinach wilts it almost instantly making this dish a cooking two-for-one!

We like fusilli pasta for this dish, because the "little springs" catch and hold more pesto in every bite.

After a filling steak dinner, the small and amusing play on French toast (*page 35*) is the perfect way to quash a sweet tooth without leaving you feeling too stuffed. The toasts, which highlight fresh oranges and raspberries with just a spoonful of ice cream, are a deliciously sweet way to put some day-old bread to good use.

Pesto Pasta with spinach

For a little peppery "attitude" use arugula instead of spinach.

Makes 2 cups; Total time: 20 minutes

- 1 cup dry fusilli or rotini pasta (2 oz.)
- 2 cups baby spinach or baby arugula
- 1/2 cup Cilantro-Onion Pesto *(page 33)*

Prepare pasta according to package directions.
Place spinach in a colander. Drain pasta and water over spinach to wilt it. Transfer hot pasta mixture to a dry bowl and toss with Cilantro-Onion Pesto until coated. Serve with Steak Stacks.

Per serving: 314 cal; 18g total fat (3g sat); 9mg chol; 226mg sodium; 30g carb; 4g fiber; 11g protein

Draining the pasta over the greens is a quick way to wilt them and ready both to mix with pesto.

Petite Toast
with rummy fruit and ice cream

Superfine sugar works best in these sweet bites because it dissolves quickly, but granulated sugar works as well.

Makes 2 servings; Total time: 15 minutes

FOR THE TOAST—

- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/3 cup superfine sugar
- 1/4 tsp. vanilla extract
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 2 slices of French baguette (cut into two 2×2-inch squares)
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter

FOR THE FRUIT—

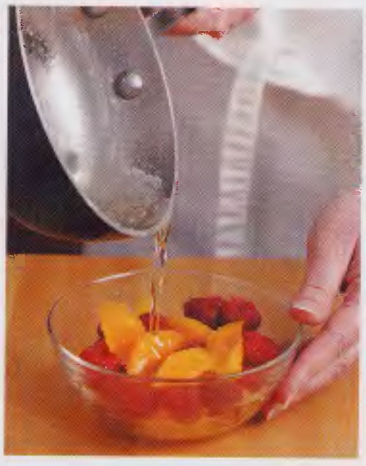
- 2 oranges, cut into segments
- 1/4 cup raspberries
- 3 Tbsp. superfine sugar
- 2 Tbsp. spiced rum (*optional*)
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 2 small scoops vanilla ice cream

Whisk together the whole egg, egg yolk, milk, 1/3 cup sugar, vanilla, and nutmeg in a bowl. Dip each side of the bread squares into the egg mixture. (Soaking the bread may cause it to collapse as it cooks) **Melt** butter in a small skillet over medium heat. Place bread in the pan and cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook the other side until golden brown, 2–3 minutes. Remove from pan and place on serving plates.

Combine orange segments and raspberries in a bowl. Boil 3 Tbsp. sugar, rum, and water in a small saucepan until syrupy, stirring often, about 3 minutes. Cool briefly. Pour syrup over fruit and toss gently to coat. Top each toast with a small scoop of ice cream and spoon fruit mixture over. Serve immediately.

Per serving: 535 cal; 22g total fat (12g sat); 242mg chol; 288mg sodium; 81g carb; 4g fiber; 12g protein

Cut off the crust to "square" the bread. Heartier bread will stand up better when cooking.



Cool the sugar syrup a short while so it doesn't cook the fruit, but is still warm enough to pour.

Thai curries *tonight*

Red, green, or yellow — Thai curry can be yours tonight. Make it in just an hour, no take-out menu necessary.

If the local Thai takeout place is on your speed dial, you're probably a fan of Thai curries. You can create those same authentic restaurant-quality curries at home with a little ingredient know-how. And if you've never experienced Thai flavors, curries are the perfect introduction.

The first thing you'll need to do to produce knock-out curries is familiarize yourself with the ingredients (*see, below*) that are essential to making Thai curry pastes — the starting point for all Thai curries. Although many Thai pantry staples are available at your local supermarket, a trip to your local Asian market is probably in order for the best quality and largest variety of ingredients. Then, follow our step-by-step guide for making red, yellow, and green Thai curry pastes and dishes, *pages 38-41*, that will rival even your favorite take-out spot.

Thai Red Curry Pork, *page 39*

Thai Pantry

Curries are a balance of sweet, salty, sour, and bitter so no one taste dominates. A blend of some of the ingredients below (with corresponding numbers and pictures, left) results in well-rounded and balanced Thai curry pastes and curry dishes.

1) Shallots

Milder and sweeter than Western shallots, Thai shallots look like miniature red onions. Because they provide substance and pungency, they are part of the seasoning base of curries. Use them if available, or substitute Western shallots.

2) Limes

Kaffir limes, which look like regular limes with bumpy rinds, are traditional in Thai curries. If you can locate fresh or frozen ones, use them. Otherwise, use the minced zest of regular limes.

3) Dried Chiles

Soak all dried chiles in warm water at least 20 minutes before use in curry pastes, so the skins will breakdown easily. *If you are sensitive to heat, wear gloves when handling any chile pepper, dried or fresh.*

- **Dried Thai or Bird Chiles** are commonly used in curry paste. You can seed dried Thai chiles to reduce their heat, but this can be quite tedious due to their tiny size.
- **Guajillo or Pasilla Chiles** These large, dried red chiles can be used in place of the Fresno or red jalapeños called for in the Red Curry Paste recipe, *page 38*. When using large chiles, remove the seeds, stems, and ribs before soaking.

4) Fresh Chiles

- **Thai Chiles** range in color from green to red and are typically 1– to 1½–inches long. Green Thai Chiles are hotter than ripened red ones. That's why most green curries are the hottest. To use fresh Thai chiles, cut off the stems, if still attached, and chop — seeds and all.
- **Red Fresno Chiles** are similar to jalapeños in size and heat level, and their thin skins are well-suited to curry pastes because they're easily broken down. To tame their heat, seed them before crushing.
- **Serrano Chiles** are one of the most commonly available hot chiles. If you like heat, these are the chile for you. Not a fan of hot? Seed them or substitute jalapeños.

5) Coriander & Cilantro

Coriander seeds add a citrus-like flavor to curries. Toasting them slightly before crushing deepens that flavor.

Cilantro root is typically used in Thai cooking, but because it's not readily available, substitute the flavorful stems in curry paste.

6) Cumin Seeds

This ancient richly-flavored, earthy spice is shaped like a caraway seed and is a common curry paste ingredient. To bring out its flavor, toast the whole seeds before grinding and using. As a last resort, use ground cumin.

7) Fish Sauce (*nam pla*)

Made by fermenting fish with salt in water, this pungent iced tea-colored liquid is a major flavor player in Thai foods. In curries, it's used as seasoning instead of salt.

8) Shrimp Paste (*gapi*)

is a mixture of salted, fermented, and dried shrimp. This intensely-flavored seasoning paste provides a background flavor in curry pastes. If you don't add it the curries seem to be lacking something you just can't put your finger on, mostly depth of flavor.

9) Ginger

The rhizome of a ginger plant. Fresh gingerroot has a gnarly, knobby appearance and should be peeled before using.

10) Galangal (*kha*)

Looking a lot like ginger, this pungent rhizome with a mustard-like flavor has a tough outer skin that must be peeled away before use. Under it is a woody and very tough flesh. We grated ours with a microplane. If you don't have one, chop it before buzzing in a food processor (if using for curry paste) or soak it in water for 30 minutes so it's easier to crush. Older galangal brings more flavor to curries. It will be darker orange in color (like that pictured on page 36) than the young reddish-pink galangal. You'll almost certainly have to visit an Asian market to find it. If you can't, substitute ginger.

11) Lemongrass

These grassy, reed-like stalks give curries a citrusy floral flavor and aroma while cutting some of the richness of coconut-milk-based curries.

Purchase blemish-free stalks with white roots. Use only the bottom 4 inches of the stalk. Just before using, peel away the tough outer layers and smash or chop the bottom portion. Fresh or frozen lemongrass can be used, but skip the dried variety — it lacks flavor.

12) Coconut Milk & Cream

Open a can of coconut milk without shaking it, and you'll find a white mass at the top. This is the cream. The opaque layer under it is the milk. Scoop out the cream, and use it to fry curry paste. The milk will be used later as well.

making *curry paste*

Yes, there are premade Thai curry pastes readily available in the supermarket. But they're no match for the bright, fresh flavor (and spicy heat) of homemade curry pastes!

Making curry paste is simple. Start by chopping/preparing all the ingredients, then pound them until paste-like. It's that simple! Traditionally, a large, heavy-bottomed mortar and pestle is employed for the crushing. Start with the toughest and most fibrous ingredients, breaking them down completely, before adding the next ingredients in the recipe.

This mortar and pestle method takes a little time, but it is the most authentic. In Thailand, it's a skill developed over years. If you don't have that kind of time (or the need to take out your aggressions!), toss the ingredients into a mini-food processor with a tablespoon or two of water and buzz until a paste forms.

I found that, though not traditional, sealing the ingredients in a plastic bag and pounding with the smooth side of a meat mallet works, too. In fact, it gives the advantage of seeing just how crushed the ingredients are before you add the next ones. This is especially important in red curry paste as the skins of the fresh chiles need to be crushed into small flakes so they don't give a poor mouthfeel in dishes like the Red Curry Pork.

Red Curry Paste

Makes 1/4–1/3 cup
Total time: about 45 minutes

- 1/4 cup small dried red chiles (about 15–20 Thai bird chiles or chile de arbol)
- 1 Tbsp. coriander seeds
- 1 tsp. cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp. black peppercorns
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 5 red Fresno or jalapeño chiles, seeded and chopped
- 2 Tbsp. chopped lemongrass
- 2 Tbsp. chopped garlic
- 2 Tbsp. chopped shallots
- 2 Tbsp. chopped cilantro stems
- 1 Tbsp. grated fresh galangal
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh ginger
- Minced zest of 1 lime
- 1 tsp. shrimp paste (*optional*)
- 1/2 tsp. palm or brown sugar

Soak chiles in warm water in a bowl until softened, 20 minutes, and then drain.

Toast coriander seeds in a small skillet over medium-high heat until fragrant, 3–4 minutes; transfer to a spice grinder. Toast cumin seeds in same skillet just until they start to smoke; transfer to spice grinder and grind spices with peppercorns until fine; set aside.

With a mortar and pestle (or in a mini food processor), pulverize the chiles with the ground spices and salt until a paste begins to form. Add the lemongrass, garlic, shallots, cilantro, galangal, ginger, zest, shrimp paste, and sugar, pounding each fully into the paste before adding the next, until an almost-smooth paste forms. (If using a mini food processor, combine all ingredients and process with 1 Tbsp. water until a paste forms.) Transfer paste to a small container, cover tightly, refrigerate up to a week.

Yellow Curry Paste

Substitute 5 small dried red chiles for the 1/4 cup called for in the Red Curry Paste. Omit Fresno chiles. Make paste according to recipe directions. Add 2 tsp. curry powder, and 1 tsp. ground turmeric to the paste, stirring or pounding to combine.

Green Curry Paste

Substitute 1/2 cup minced green Thai bird chiles (1 1/2 oz.) and 2–3 seeded and chopped green serrano chiles for dried red and fresh Fresno chiles called for in the Red Curry Paste. Make paste according to recipe directions.

To use lemongrass, trim off the reedy stalks and root end, then chop up the bottom 4 inches.

Before grating or chopping galangal, cut or peel away the very tough outer skin with a sharp knife.

For the smoothest paste, scrape down the sides of the processor periodically and continue puréeing.

cooking with *curry paste*

At the base of many Thai curry dishes is coconut milk. It's how you use that coconut milk that determines the type of curry you're making. There are two main types of curry dishes, fried and boiled.

Fried curry dishes like our Thai Red Curry with Pork, *below*, and Thai Green Curry Shrimp, *page 41*, use coconut cream. In regular cans of coconut milk, coconut cream is the fat that has separated to the top of the can. Scoop this out and then cook it over high heat until it "cracks" or separates (*see photo below, right*). Then, it's ready to fry the curry paste, deepening its flavor and fragrance.

Boiled curry dishes like the Yellow Curry Chicken, *page 40*, are exactly what they sound like. You boil the curry paste with water, broth, or coconut milk to release its flavors. Both methods are traditional Thai ways to cook curry, and both are super-simple.

Thai Red Curry Pork

Proteins are virtually interchangeable in curries. Try seafood, chicken, pork, beef, or tofu in any of our curries.

Makes 4 servings (about 3 cups)
Total time: about 30 minutes

- 1 can coconut milk (13.5 oz)
- 4–5 Tbsp. Red Curry Paste (*page 38*) or purchased
- 1 lb. pork tenderloin, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. fish sauce
- 1 tsp. palm or brown sugar

Remove cream from the top of the coconut milk and heat over medium-high in a large sauté pan, stirring frequently until bubbles start forming on the surface of the paste and it appears to be separating.

Add curry paste, stirring to combine. Cook until paste becomes very fragrant, about 5 minutes.

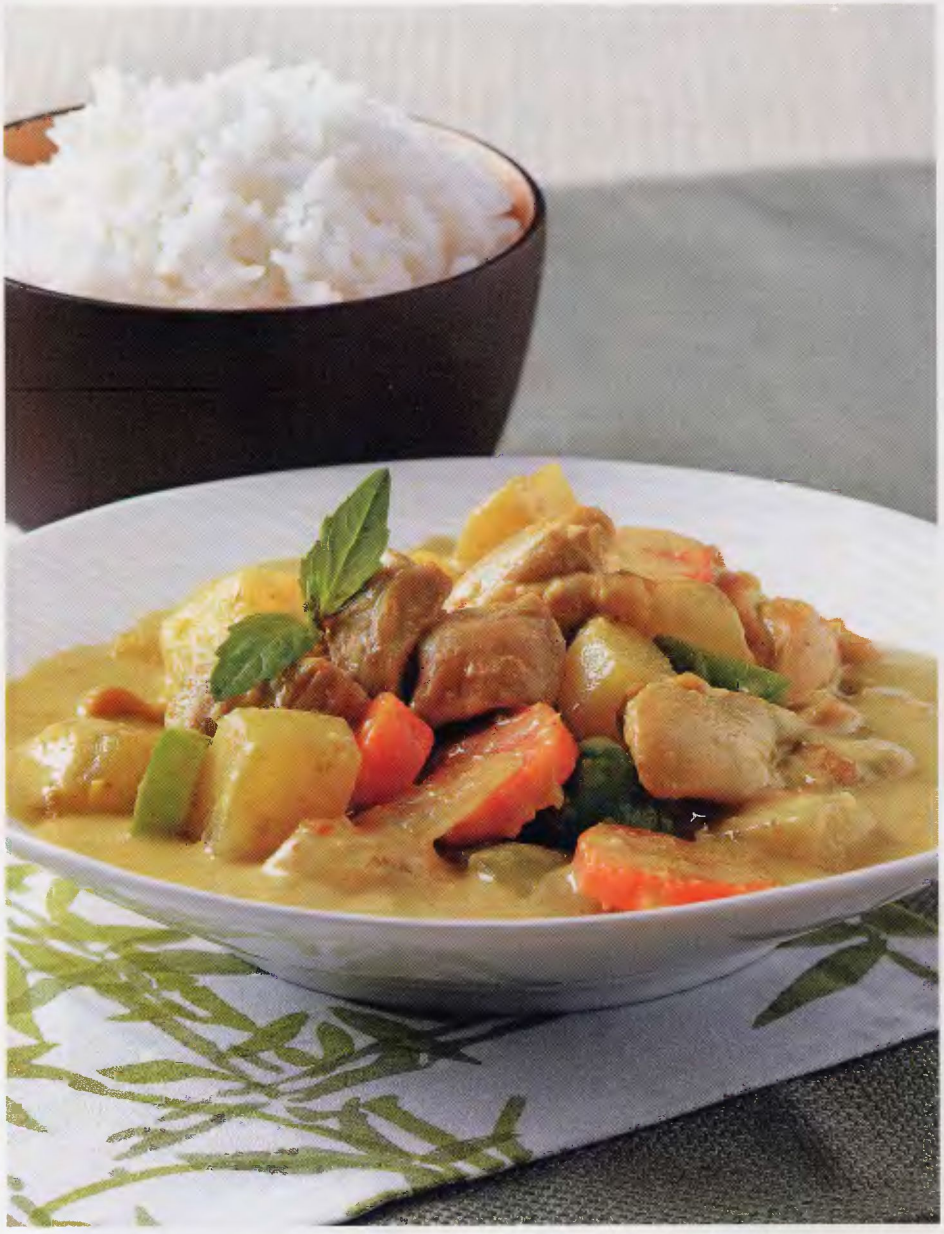
Sauté tenderloin slices in curry paste until they brown and are cooked through, about 5 minutes.

Add remaining coconut milk; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer about 5 minutes. Season with fish sauce and sugar. Serve with Jasmine Rice, *page 40*.

Per serving: 380 cal; 25g total fat (19g sat); 74mg chol; 1158mg sodium; 11g carb; 2g fiber; 27g protein

Spoon off the coconut cream on top of the coconut milk, stopping where the liquid turns opaque.

When the cream "cracks" it will be bubbly and appear separated. Now it's ready to fry the curry paste.



Yellow Curry Chicken

Yellow curry is curry with training wheels. It's the most popular Thai curry in Western cultures because it's the mildest of the three types.

Makes 4 servings (6–7 cups)
Total time: about 30 minutes

- 2 cans coconut milk (13.5 oz. *each*)
- 3–4 Tbsp. Yellow Curry Paste (*page 38*) or purchased
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cubed
- 3 Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced into 1/4-inch thick rounds
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 tsp. fish sauce
- 1/2 tsp. sugar

Heat coconut milk in a large saucepan over medium.
Stir in curry paste until blended. Add chicken, potatoes, carrots, and onion. Increase heat to high; bring curry to a boil.
Boil curry until potatoes are fork-tender and chicken is cooked through. Add bell pepper and boil 5 minutes. Stir in fish sauce and sugar. Serve with Jasmine Rice.

Per serving: 540 cal; 41g total fat (34g sat); 57mg chol; 634mg sodium; 26g carb; 5g fiber; 20g protein

For a boiled curry, add the paste to coconut milk, then blend and heat them together.

Jasmine Rice

To quell the spiciness of curries, Thai people often serve the rice at room temperature rather than hot.

Makes 4 servings (8 cups)
Total time: 30 minutes

- 4 cups water
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups dry Jasmine rice

Bring water and salt to a boil in a medium saucepan.
Stir in rice and return to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover rice, and simmer until water is absorbed and rice is cooked through, 20 minutes. Let sit, covered, 5 minutes, then fluff with a fork.

Per serving: 160 cal; 0g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 360mg sodium; 36g carb; 1g fiber; 3g protein

Thai Green Curry Shrimp

Green curry is especially spicy. So, if you're a fan of super hot foods, this is the curry for you. If not, start with the yellow or red curry and work up.

Makes 4 servings (4–5 cups)
Total time: about 30 minutes

- 1 can coconut milk (13.5 oz.)
- 4–5 Tbsp. Green Curry Paste (*page 38*) or purchased
- 2 Tbsp. fish sauce
- 1 tsp. palm or brown sugar
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails left on
- 1 can bamboo shoots, drained (8 oz.)
- 1 cup frozen green peas, thawed
- 1/2 cup torn basil leaves
- Lime wedges

Remove cream from the top of the coconut milk; heat over medium-high in a large sauté pan, stirring frequently until bubbles form on the surface, and it separates. **Add** curry paste, stirring to combine. Cook until paste becomes very fragrant, about 5 minutes. Add remaining coconut milk and stir to combine. Bring to a boil. Season with fish sauce and sugar; simmer 5 minutes. **Stir in** bell pepper; cook until pepper begins to soften, 5 minutes. Add shrimp; cook until opaque and no longer pink, 3–4 minutes. **Add** bamboo shoots, peas, and basil; cook just to heat shoots and peas through, 1 minute. Serve with Jasmine Rice, *page 40*.

Per serving: 417 cal; 24g total fat (19g sat); 172mg chol; 1333mg sodium; 22g carb; 6g fiber; 30g protein

In curries, fish sauce is often used in place of salt to season. You can add more or less to suit your taste.

Bamboo shoots only need to be heated through, so drain them and add near the end of cooking.

simple, delicious portobellos

These mushroom Goliaths are easy to prepare, and so good! Here are three fun recipes you can have on the table in under 30 minutes.

The portobello is as versatile as it is tasty. It's actually a crimini mushroom that's been allowed to grow to full size, which makes it a perfect candidate for stuffing or as a burger or steak substitute on the grill.

Thanks to the porous flesh of the mushroom, it readily absorbs seasonings, oils, and marinades. Portobellos cook quickly, but can also be served raw. Scrape out the gills with a spoon and thinly slice mushrooms before adding to salads or sandwiches.

Stuffed Mushroom Muffulettas

Mix it up with this mushroomed version of the New Orleans classic.

Makes 4 sandwiches
Total time: 25 minutes

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE—

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- Black pepper to taste

FOR THE SANDWICHES—

- 4 ciabatta or focaccia buns, halved
- 4 portobellos
- 5 oz. hard salami, chopped
- 4 oz. pimiento-stuffed Spanish olives, chopped
- 4 oz. provolone cheese, chopped

Preheat broiler on low with oven rack 6–8 inches from the heating element. Coat a baking sheet with nonstick spray.

Whisk together oil, vinegar, and Dijon for the vinaigrette. Season with pepper.

Brush cut sides of bun halves with vinaigrette and toast lightly under broiler, about 4 minutes; set aside.

Remove mushroom gills with a spoon. Brush mushrooms with vinaigrette and place topside up on bottom buns; broil on baking sheet, 4 minutes. Turn mushrooms over on buns and broil 2 minutes more; remove from oven.

Pulse salami, olives, and cheese in a food processor until finely chopped. Combine salami mixture and remaining vinaigrette in a bowl and microwave until mixture is warm, 2 minutes.

Divide salami mixture among mushrooms; return to oven and broil until cheese starts to melt and brown on top, about 5 minutes.

To serve, cover mushrooms with top buns and slice in half.

Per sandwich: 515 cal; 33g total fat (11g sat); 56mg chol; 1875mg sodium; 33g carb; 2g fiber; 20g protein

Gently and carefully scrape the gills from the mushrooms using the edge of a teaspoon.

Turn broiled portobellos stem-side up on buns, and fill with salami mixture to form loose mounds.

Portobello Fries

Makes 24–30 strips
Total time: 25 minutes

- 2 cups vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tsp. paprika
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 4 portobellos, cut into 1/2-inch-thick strips
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large cast-iron skillet to 360°. Place a rack on top of a baking sheet.
Beat together eggs and water in a bowl. Mix together flour, crumbs, Parmesan, paprika, and garlic powder in another small bowl.
Coat mushroom strips in egg wash, allowing excess to drip off. Set mushrooms on prepared rack and season with salt and pepper.
Dredge mushroom strips in flour mixture, shaking to remove any excess. Coat again with egg wash and dredge a second time in flour mixture. Set double-coated mushrooms back on rack.
Fry mushroom strips in batches until golden brown on both sides, 2–3 minutes total. (Only fry as many strips at a time as will fit in the pan without touching). Place fried mushrooms back on a paper-towel-lined platter. Season with salt and pepper.
Serve Portobello Fries immediately with favorite dipping sauce.

Per 4 strips: 423 cal; 16g total fat (4g sat); 189mg chol; 500mg sodium; 49g carb; 3g fiber; 20g protein

Portobellos Dijonnaise

Makes 4 servings
Total time: 25 minutes

FOR THE MUSHROOMS—

- 4 large or 8 small portobellos, (1 1/2 lb. total)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and black pepper

FOR THE SAUCE—

- 1/2 cup thinly sliced shallots
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 1/2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1/2 cup port or dry Marsala
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Chopped fresh parsley

Preheat grill to medium high or heat a grill pan over medium-high.
Remove portobello gills and trim stems. Brush mushrooms with 1 Tbsp. oil. Season with salt and pepper; set aside.
Cook shallots in 1 Tbsp. oil in a sauté pan over medium-low heat until shallots begin to brown, 3–5 minutes. Add broth, port, Worcestershire, and Dijon. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce sauce by half, about 15 minutes. Season sauce with salt and pepper.
Grill mushrooms uncovered, until grill marks appear and mushrooms are softened, 2 minutes per side. Slice mushrooms into 1/2-inch-thick strips and serve with sauce drizzled on top (if sauce thickens too much, thin out with additional 1–2 Tbsp. beef broth).
Garnish mushrooms with parsley and serve with a fresh salad on the side.

Per serving with 2 Tbsp. sauce: 155 cal; 7g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 158mg sodium; 13g carb; 1g fiber; 4g protein

quick romesco-style grilled pizza

Love gourmet pizza, but hate the price? Fire up your grill to create the same smoky taste and crisp crust in your own backyard, while saving a little "dough," too!

With gourmet flair and tons of flavor options, grilling your own pizza can rival any upscale restaurant's version. The bonus: keeping a little heft to your wallet. While the average gourmet pizza can set you back six to eight dollars a serving, our pizzas serve eight people for about $2.50 a serving.

Restaurants may have the advantage of wood-fired grills or brick ovens for their pizzas, but you can achieve the same smoky flavors with your own gas or charcoal grill. The only other tools you need: tongs to flip the crust and a pizza peel or baking sheet with a spatula to nudge the pizza from the grill.

Because the crust cooks quickly, the key to successful grilled pizza is having all the toppings prepared and at the ready near the grill. Then fire it up, and in under 10 minutes you'll have perfect pizza at home.

Grilled Gourmet Pizza
with roasted red pepper sauce

Makes 2 pizzas; Total time: 1 1/2 hours

FOR THE CRUST—

- 1 1/4 cups warm water (110°–115°)
- 4 1/2 tsp. quick-rise yeast (two pkgs.)
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, divided
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp. fennel seed
- 2 tsp. kosher salt

FOR THE SAUCE—

- 3–4 medium red bell peppers
- 1/2 cup fresh basil
- 3 Tbsp. toasted pine nuts
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. chopped garlic
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt

FOR THE TOPPINGS—

- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1 cup shredded cooked chicken
- 1 cup canned artichoke hearts, drained and quartered
- 1 pkg. goat cheese, crumbled (4 oz.)
- Olive oil for brushing the dough

Combine water, yeast, and 2 Tbsp. oil for the crust in the bowl of a stand mixer.

Whisk together flour, fennel seed, and salt; add to yeast mixture. Mix on low speed with the dough hook until smooth, about 10 minutes. Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 12 times.

Place remaining 1 Tbsp. oil in a large bowl. Add dough and turn to coat with oil. Cover dough and let rise in warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

Preheat grill to medium-high. Roast bell peppers on the grill until blackened, 6–8 minutes. Transfer peppers to a resealable plastic bag to steam, about 20 minutes. Peel and seed peppers.

Pulse peppers, basil, pine nuts, 3 Tbsp. oil, garlic, and 1/2 tsp. salt in a food processor until minced; set sauce aside.

Divide dough into two pieces; roll each piece into a smooth ball. Cover dough balls with plastic wrap and let rest for 10 minutes.

Prepare grill for indirect grilling. Leave one side on medium-high heat and turn off other side.

Gently stretch each dough ball into a 12×18-inch rectangle. Place one dough on lit side of the grill; close the lid and cook until crust bubbles and grill marks appear, about 2 minutes.

Flip crust; move to unlit side of grill. Brush with olive oil. Spread half of the sauce onto crust. Add half the spinach, chicken, artichokes, and goat cheese. Grill pizza, covered, over indirect heat until warmed through, 4–5 minutes.

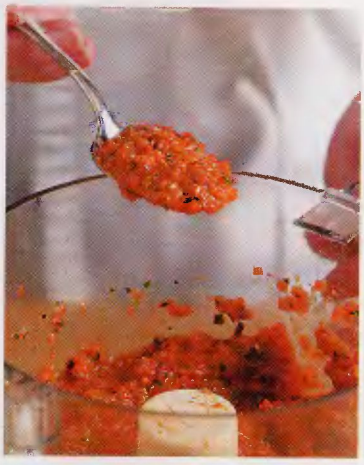
Remove pizza from grill with a pizza peel or on an inverted baking sheet. Repeat grilling with remaining dough and toppings.

Per 1/4 pizza: 352 cal; 17g total fat (4g sat); 17mg chol; 718mg sodium; 39g carb; 3g fiber; 13g protein

WAYS TO SAVE TIME, TOO!

- Get a jump start by making the pizza dough the night before you want to serve the pizza. After the dough rises, divide it, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate. Pull it from the fridge about 20 minutes before you're ready to grill the pizzas.
- Make the roasted red pepper sauce up to two days ahead and refrigerate until needed.
- No time to make your own dough? Many supermarkets sell premade pizza dough in their deli or bakery refrigerator cases.
- Purchase a rotisserie chicken. Use a portion of it for the pizzas, and save the rest for another meal.

Seal the peppers in a plastic bag. The steam created from the trapped heat will loosen their skins.



Pulse the roasted pepper mixture for the sauce in the food processor until still slightly chunky.

Gently stretch the dough with your fingertips, being careful not to tear or poke holes in the dough.

answers to your questions

Q: I've noticed annatto powder listed in several recipes. What is it, and where can I find it?

— Melissa Welch, Omaha, NE

Answer: You've probably eaten annatto powder without knowing it. Its most common use is as a natural food dye for butter, margarine, cheese, and fish. Often referred to as poor man's saffron because it provides a similar yellow color to foods, annatto has a slightly sweet, peppery flavor with a hint of nutmeg.

Annatto powder is made by grinding achiote seeds, which are housed in the pods of a flowering shrub native to South America. It's commonly used for both color and flavor in Latin American, Caribbean, Spanish, and Filipino cuisines. You'll often find it in rubs and dishes native to the Yucatan area of Mexico.

With its different spellings and names, annatto powder can be difficult to locate. Look for it in Latin and Spanish markets. We found ours in a local Asian market, very affordably priced.

Q: Besides color, what's the difference between light and dark brown sugar?

— Katie Bell, Williamsport, PA

Answer: The biggest difference is flavor. Both light and dark brown sugar are refined white sugars that have molasses added to them for color and flavor.

Dark brown sugar can contain nearly double the amount of molasses of light brown sugar. That extra molasses can add a lot of extra flavor and moisture to the recipes you're using it in.

Because that additional molasses adds moisture, dark brown sugar yields a moister end product than light brown sugar. Most of the time this isn't an issue, so you should be able to use whichever you have on hand. That said, you might want to be careful of swapping them in moisture- and density-sensitive recipes, like cakes.

Light and dark brown sugars have similar textures, but the darker variety has a bolder molasses taste.

> Did you know?

Q: Is the tomato paste in the tube the same as in the can? Does it matter which I use?

— Lily Logan, Festus, MO

Answer: Technically, the tomato pastes sold in cans and tubes have the same ingredients, but the tomato paste sold in tubes is most often double-concentrated.

Since, in most instances, you're using tomato paste to enhance or enrich the tomato flavor of a dish, it doesn't really matter that the tomato paste in tubes is twice as strong. It may add more tomato flavor, but that's probably not a bad thing.

Unless we're using large quantities, we opt for the tube variety in the *Cuisine* Test Kitchen because it lasts nearly indefinitely when refrigerated. That's more economical than discovering an open can of paste with something fuzzy growing on it when we need to use it a few weeks later. You should use whichever you prefer and can most easily locate.

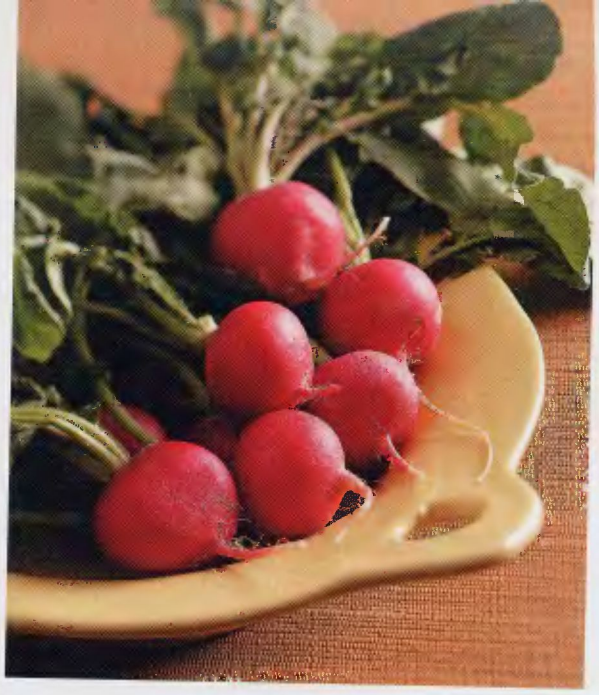
Q: What is the difference between flour and cornstarch when used as a thickener?

— Betty Irvin, Harrisburg, PA

Answer: Both cornstarch and flour are excellent thickeners. Different characteristics of each will help determine how they should be used.

Cornstarch, when used as a thickener, has two times the thickening power of the same amount of flour. It's normally used as part of a slurry where it's mixed with a cool liquid to help separate the grains of starch so they can begin absorbing liquid without clumping. You can add this slurry to a hot or cold liquid and it will begin to thicken nearly immediately. But you still must cook the cornstarch flavor from your sauce. Now that said, it doesn't mean cornstarch is a better thickener than flour.

The most common flour thickener is a roux, equal parts fat and flour, which takes a much longer time to thicken sauces. So, while cornstarch is a quicker thickener, sauces that are thickened with cornstarch aren't as stable as those thickened with a roux. Because cornstarch can break down during longer cooking times, it is less stable than roux-based sauces and shouldn't be used in sauces that will require a lot of cooking, like sawmill gravy, béchamel, or velouté.



Q: Why do some radishes have a hot or peppery flavor?

— Cindy Tabor, Kellogg, IA

Answer: Nearly all radishes, regardless of color or size, have some degree of spiciness. This is because they're the root of a plant in the mustard family.

The most common radish available in the United States is small, oval, and red, like the Cherry Belle variety pictured above. But radishes come in many colors (from orange, to purple, to black) and many sizes, such as the daikon that can be nearly 24 inches long. Flavor is affected by the age and type of radish, though. The longer it takes a radish to reach maturation, the hotter or more peppery its flavor will be.

When purchasing radishes, look for crisp, green leaves (if they're still attached), and flesh that doesn't give to pressure when squeezed (a sign it will be pithy). Though they're most often served raw, cooking radishes mellows their flavor and reduces their peppery bite. Give them a try in our radish sauce, *page 29*.

Do you have a question for *Cuisine at home* magazine?

If you're mystified by a cooking term, procedure, or technique, we're here to help. To submit your cooking question for possible publication, contact us through our e-mail address below. Please include your name, address, e-mail address, and a daytime phone number.

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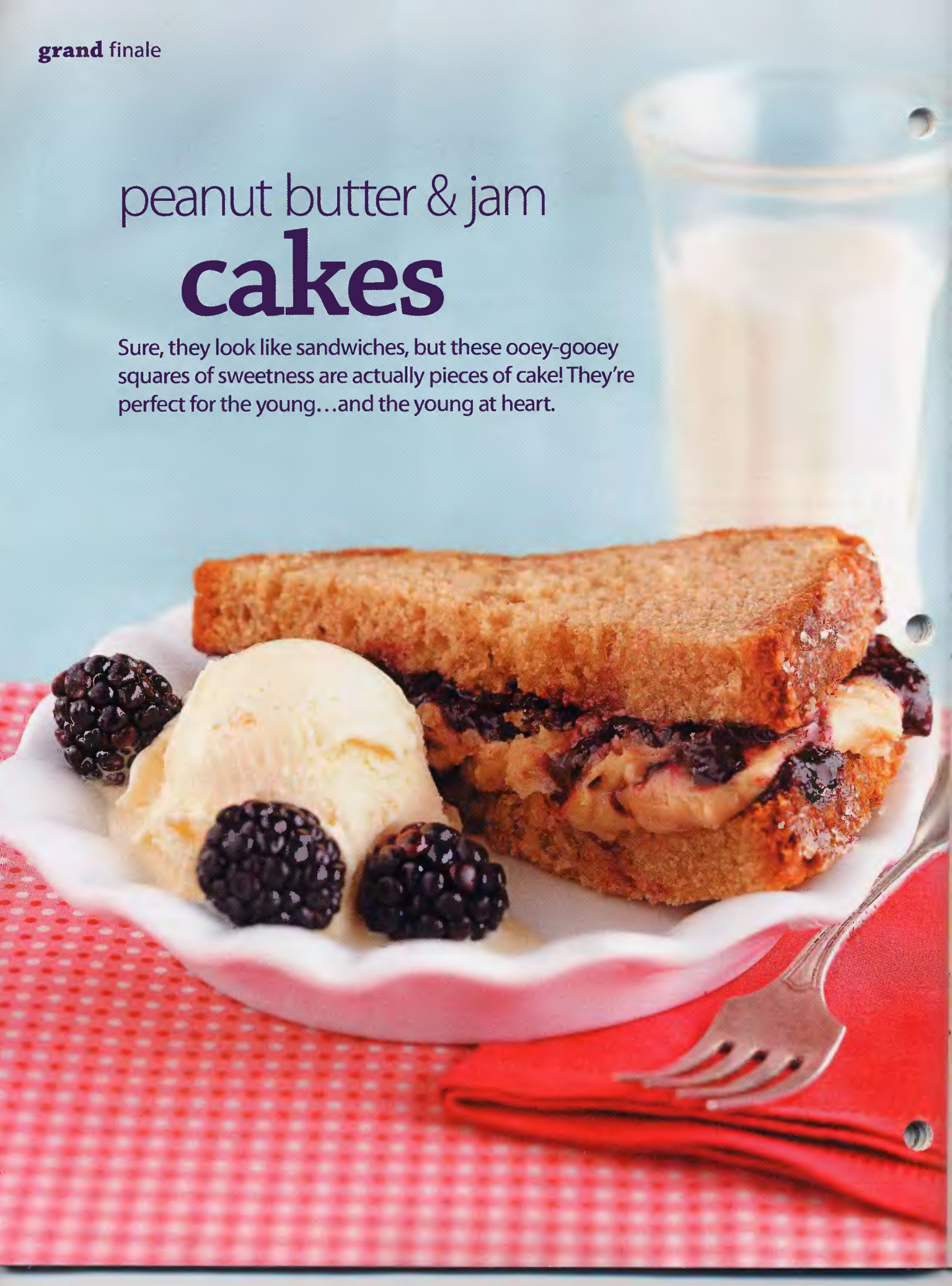
The radish is celebrated each December 23 in the Noche de los Rábanos *or Night of the Radishes festival in Oaxaca, Mexico.*

peanut butter & jam cakes

Sure, they look like sandwiches, but these ooey-gooey squares of sweetness are actually pieces of cake! They're perfect for the young…and the young at heart.



Peanut butter and jam is *the* classic salty-meets-sweet pairing. Most of us have loved it since childhood and still do. So in an attempt to recapture a bit of youth, we gave traditional PB&J a sweet dessert twist.

Transforming layer cake into these "cake-wiches" made everyone in the Test Kitchen say wow! They couldn't wait to get their hands on their very own slice of PB&J cake. Anyone you make them for is sure to feel the same way.

Baking the peanut butter cakes in loaf pans makes it a snap to cut them into "bread" slices. And the sweet, creamy peanut butter frosting becomes filling along with blackberry jam.

To hold the fillings, the cakes need to be sturdy without being too dry. That's why you need to beat the peanut butter, butter, and sugar together until the sugar dissolves. The mixture won't look light or creamy at this stage, but it will yield cakes that aren't dense and heavy.

Peanut Butter Cake

The cakes can be made a day ahead. Let them cool completely then tightly wrap in plastic wrap.

Makes 16 servings
Total time: 1 hour, 45 minutes, including baking

- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- Turbinado sugar
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. table salt
- 1 1/4 cups whole milk
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups creamy peanut butter
- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 6 eggs, room temperature

Preheat oven to 350°. Coat the inside of two 9×5-inch loaf pans with 1 Tbsp. butter; coat generously with turbinado sugar.

Whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a bowl; set aside.

Combine milk and vanilla in a measuring cup; set aside.

Cream peanut butter, 1 stick butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium-high speed until very well combined, 5 minutes.

Add eggs to the creamed mixture, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Alternately add flour and milk mixtures to butter mixture, beating on low speed after each addition just until mixed, scraping sides of bowl as needed.

Divide batter evenly between prepared pans. Bake cakes 50 minutes, then sprinkle tops with additional turbinado sugar. Loosely tent with foil if edges are getting too brown. Return the cakes to the oven; bake until a toothpick inserted in the center of each comes out clean, 10–15 minutes more. Let cakes rest in the pans on a rack for 20 minutes, then turn cakes out onto the rack to cool completely.

Prepare Blackberry Jam Spread and Peanut Butter Frosting, *page 50*. Assemble cakes according to instructions on page 51.

Per cakewich: 625 cal; 32g total fat (12g sat); 101mg chol; 345mg sodium; 77g carb; 4g fiber; 15g protein

Coating the pans with coarse sugar adds a bit of sweetness and extra crunch to the cakes.

Cream the peanut butter, butter, and sugars until they look like a smooth paste. Then add the eggs.

Add the eggs one at a time so they will incorporate evenly into the creamed mixture.

Spreading on the good stuff...

Peanut butter frosting and blackberry jam may be reminiscent of childhood but we promise it'll please even the most sophisticated palate.

Filling and assembling the cake

Once you've baked the cakes, it's on to the filling. We opted for fresh blackberry jam, but strawberry or raspberry would also be great. Experiment with your favorite berry, or purchase jam or preserves instead.

It's easy to change this dessert to a layered cake. In fact, that's how we started out. Instead of baking the cakes into loaves, bake them in two 9-inch round or square cake pans. Then double the amount of frosting so there's plenty to cover both layers. Any way you slice it — elegant layers or fun "cakewiches" — this is one crowd-pleasing dessert.

Blackberry Jam Spread

If fresh berries aren't available, frozen berries can be substituted.

Makes 1 cup
Total time: 25 minutes + chilling

- 3 cups blackberries
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. water
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. berry juice (from the cooked berries)
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

Combine blackberries, sugar, and water in a saucepan over medium-low heat; simmer until berries release juice, about 20 minutes. **Whisk** together cornstarch and berry juice in a bowl, until smooth; blend into berry mixture, and cook until thickened, 2–3 minutes. **Remove** from heat, stir in lemon juice. Cover and chill 30 minutes.

Using berry juice from the cooked berries in the slurry thickens the jam without adding more liquid.

Peanut Butter Frosting

This frosting is so delicious you might be tempted to eat it by the spoonful!

Makes 3 cups Total time: 15 minutes

- 3/4 cup peanut butter
- 1 stick unsalted butter, softened
- 3 cups sifted powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract

Beat peanut butter and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment on medium-high speed until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. **Add** powdered sugar, milk, and vanilla, mixing just until smooth and creamy.

Overbeating the frosting after adding the powdered sugar can cause the frosting to separate.

Building these cakewiches is a snap!

No need to be fancy or fuss over perfect frosting. Really, these sweet treats are as easy to put together as your favorite sandwich!

To assemble the cakewiches, trim off the ends of each cake (a serrated knife works best), and then cut each cake into sixteen 1/2-inch-thick slices before adding fillings.

Spread 3 Tbsp. of frosting and 1 Tbsp. jam on a slice of cake. Top with another slice of cake, and cut diagonally into 2 triangles. Repeat with remaining cake, frosting, and jam.

"...they say it's addictive,
and I have some people
who come every day that I'm open.
They come every day.
I don't know how they do it, but
they are chicken-holics."

— Andre Prince Jeffries,
owner of Prince's Hot Chicken Shack
Nashville, TN

Nashville Hot Chicken
recipe on page 15

Cuisine at home